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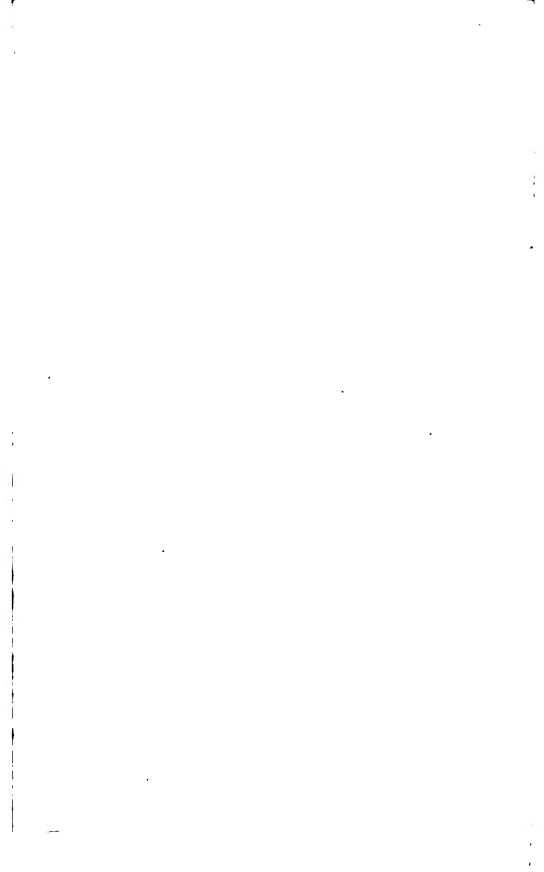
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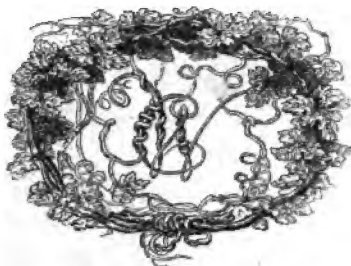




THE
LONDON THEATRE.

A COLLECTION OF THE
Most celebrated Dramatic Pieces.

CORRECTLY GIVEN, FROM COPIES USED IN THE THEATRES,
BY
THOMAS DIBDIN,
OF THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.



VOLUME II.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR WHITTINGHAM AND ARLISS,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

1815.

1525

THE
BUSY BODY.

A Comedy.

BY MRS. CENTLIVRE.

CORRECTLY GIVEN, FROM COPIES USED IN THE THEATRES,

BY

THOMAS DIBDIN,

Author of several Dramatic Pieces: and

PROMPTER OF THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.



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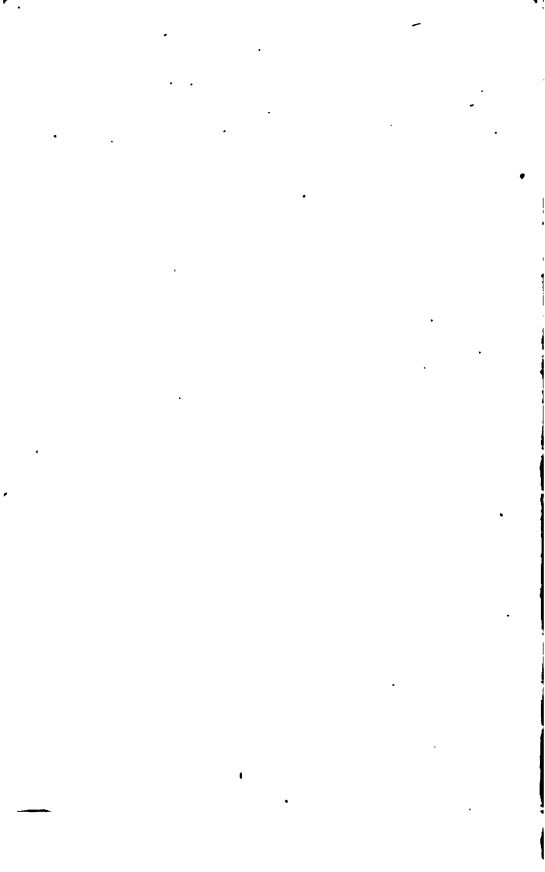
1815.

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THE BUSY BODY,

FIRST acted at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, in 1709, was so little appreciated by the actors, that Mr. Wilks, in particular, threw his part into the pit at rehearsal, and was with great difficulty prevailed on by the terrified authoress to resume it. The town, influenced by green-room report, scarcely noticed the theatre on the night the play came out; and the few who went, attended very little to the commencement of the comedy; which, however, so won upon them by degrees, that to use the language of *modern underlining*, "it was announced for repetition amid thunders of applause, and without a single dissentient voice." As it came out late in the season (the mean opinion entertained of it by the theatre having long delayed its production), it could only be performed thirteen nights; but each of those, especially the author's, were crowded to excess, the first only excepted. A second season completed its success; and when the company divided, it was acted at Drury Lane and the Haymarket, on the same evenings, for six successive nights; Dogget (whose memory is dear to watermen) playing *Marplot* at the latter theatre, in opposition to Pack, the original, at Drury Lane. It is unnecessary to add, that the BUSY BODY is still a reigning favourite.



PROLOGUE.

THOUGH modern prophets were expos'd of late,
The author could not prophecy her fate;
If with such scenes an audience had been fir'd
The poet must have really been inspir'd.
But these, alas! are melancholy days
For modern prophets and for modern plays:
Yet since prophetic lies please fools o' fashion,
And women are so fond of agitation,
To men of sense I'll prophecy anew,
And tell you wondrous things that will prove true.
Undaunted col'nels will to camps repair,
Assur'd there'll be no skirmishes this year;
On our own terms will flow the wish'd-for peace,
All wars, except 'twixt man and wife, will cease;
The Grand Monarque may wish his son a throne,
But hardly will advance to lose his own.

This season most things bear a smiling face,
But play'rs in summer have a dismal case,
Since your appearance only is our set of grace.
Court ladies will to country seats be gone,
My lord can't all the year live great in town;
Where, wanting op'ras, basset, and a play,
They'll sigh and stitch a gown to pass the time away:
Gay city wives at Tunbridge will appear,
Whose husbands long have labour'd for an heir,
Where many a courtier may their wants relieve,
But by the waters only they conceive:
The Fleet-street sempstress—toast of Temple sparks,
That runs spruce neckcloths for attorneys' clerks,
At Cupid's gardens will her hours regale,
Sing "fair Dorinda," and drink bottled ale:
At all assemblies rakes are up and down,
And gamesters where they think they are not known.

Should I denounce our author's fate to-day,
To cry down prophecies you'd damn the play:
Yet whims like these have sometimes made you laugh;
'Tis tattling all, like Isaac Bickerstaff.

Since war and places claim the bards that write,
Be kind, and bear a woman's treat to-night;
Let your indulgence all her fears allay,
And none but women-haters damn this play.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted at Drury Lane, in 1700. *Drury Lane, 1811.*

<i>Sir George Airy</i> . .	Mr. Wilks.	Mr. Elliston.
<i>Sir Francis Gripe</i> .	Mr. Estcourt.	Mr. Downton.
<i>Charles</i>	Mr. Mills.	Mr. Holland.
<i>Sir Jealous Traffick</i>	Mr. Bullock.	Mr. Palmer.
<i>Marplot</i>	Mr. Pack.	Mr. Bannister.
<i>Whisper</i>	Mr. Bullock, jun.	Mr. Decamp.
<i>Miranda</i>	Mrs. Cross.	Mrs. Davison.
<i>Isabinda</i>	Mrs. Rogers.	Mrs. Scott.
<i>Patch</i>	Mrs. Saunders.	Mrs. Harlowe.
<i>Scentwell</i>	Mrs. Mills.	Miss Tidswell.

ACT THE FIRST.



SCENE I. *The Park.*

Enter SIR GEORGE AIRY, meeting CHARLES.

Charles. **H**A! sir George Airy a birding thus early! What forbidden game rous'd you so soon? for no lawful occasion could invite a person of your figure abroad at such unfashionable hours.

Sir G. There are some men, Charles, whom fortune has left free from inquietudes, who are diligently studious to find out ways and means to make themselves uneasy.

Charles. Is it possible that any thing in nature can ruffle the temper of a man whom the four seasons of the year compliment with as many thousand pounds; nay, and a father at rest with his ancestors?

Sir G. Why, there it is now! a man that wants money thinks none can be unhappy that has it; but my affairs are in such a whimsical posture that it will require a calculation of my nativity to find if my gold will relieve me or not.

Charles. Ha, ha, ha! never consult the stars about

that; gold has a power beyond them. Then what can thy business be that gold won't serve thee in?

Sir G. Why I'm in love.

Charles. In love!—Ha, ha, ha, ha! in love!—

Ha, ha, ha, ha! with what, pr'ythee? a cherubin?

Sir G. No; with a woman.

Charles. A woman! good. Ha, ha, ha, ha! and gold not help thee?

Sir G. But suppose I'm in love with two—

Charles. Ay, if thou'rt in love with two hundred, gold will fetch 'em, I warrant thee, boy. But who are they? who are they? come.

Sir G. One is a lady whose face I never saw, but witty to a miracle; the other beautiful as Venus—

Charles. And a fool—

Sir G. For aught I know, for I never spoke to her; but you can inform me. I am charm'd by the wit of the one, and die for the beauty of the other.

Charles. And pray which are you in quest of now?

Sir G. I prefer the sensual pleasure; I'm for her I've seen, who is thy father's ward, Miranda.

Charles. Nay, then I pity you; for the Jew, my father, will no more part with her and thirty thousand pounds than he would with a guinea to keep me from starving.

Sir G. Now you see gold can't do every thing, Charles.

Charles. Yes; for 'tis her gold that bars my father's gate against you.

Sir G. Why, if he be this avaricious wretch, how can'st thou by such a liberal education?

Charles. Not a soure out of his pocket, I assure you: I had an uncle who defray'd that charge; but for some little wildness of youth, though he made me his heir, left dad my guardian till I came to years of discretion, which I presume the old gentleman will never think I am; and now he has got the estate into his clutches, it does me no more good than if it lay in Prester John's dominions.

Sir G. What, canst thou find no stratagem to redeem it?

Charles. I have made many essays to no purpose; though want, the mistress of invention, still tempts me on, yet still the old fox is too cunning for me.—I am upon my last project, which if it fails, then for my last refuge, a brown musket.

Sir G. What is't? can I assist thee?

Charles. Not yet; when you can, I have confidence enough in you to ask it.

Sir G. I am always ready. But what does he intend to do with Miranda? Is she to be sold in private, or will he put her up by way of auction, at who bids most? If so, 'egad I'm for him; my gold, as you say, shall be subservient to my pleasure.

Charles. To deal ingenuously with you, sir George, I know very little of her or home; for since my uncle's death, and my return from travel, I have never been well with my father; he thinks my expenses too great, and I his allowance too little; he never sees me but he quarrels, and to avoid that I shun his house as much as possible. The report is he intends to marry her himself.

Sir G. Can she consent to it?

Charles. Yes, faith, so they say: but I tell you I am wholly ignorant of the matter. I fancy she plays the mother-in-law already, and sets the old gentleman on to do mischief.

Sir G. Then I have your free consent to get her?

Charles. Ay, and my helping hand, if occasion be.

Sir G. Poh! yonder's a fool coming this way; let's avoid him.

Charles. What, Marplot? No, no, he's my instrument; there's a thousand conveniences in him; he'll lend me his money when he has any, run of my errands, and be proud on it; in short, he'll pimp for me, lie for me, drink for me, do any thing but fight for me; and that I trust to my own arm for.

Sir G. Nay, then he's to be endured; I never knew his qualifications before.

Enter MARPLOT, with a Patch across his Face.

Mar. Dear Charles, yours——Ha! sir George A'ry!

the man in the world I have an ambition to be known to! [*Aside*] Give me thy hand, dear boy.

Charles. A good assurance! But harkye, how came your beautiful countenance clouded in the wrong place?

Mar. I must confess 'tis a little mal-a-propos; but no matter for that. A word with you, Charles. Pr'ythee introduce me to sir George—he is a man of wit, and I'd give ten guineas to—

Charles. When you have 'em, you mean.

Mar. Ay, when I have 'em; pugh, pox, you cut the thread of my discourse—I would give ten guineas, I say, to be rank'd in his acquaintance. But, pr'ythee, introduce me.

Charles. Well, on condition you'll give us a true account how you came by that mourning nose, I will.

Mar. I'll do it.

Charles. Sir George, here's a gentleman has a passionate desire to kiss your hand.

Sir G. Oh! I honour men of the sword! and I presume this gentleman is lately come from Spain or Portugal—by his scars.

Mar. No really, sir George, mine sprung from civil fury. Happening last night into the groom porter's—I had a strong inclination to go ten guineas with a sort of a, sort of a—kind of a milksop, as I thought. A pox of the dice! he flung out, and my pockets being empty, as Charles knows they often are, he proved a surly North Briton, and broke my face for my deficiency.

Sir G. Ha, ha! and did not you draw?

Mar. Draw, sir! why I did but lay my hand upon my sword to make a swift retreat, and he roar'd out, Now the deel a ma sal, sir, gin ye touch yer steel I se whip mine through yer wem.

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha!

Charles. Ha, ha, ha, ha! Safe was the word. So you walk'd off, I suppose.

Mar. Yes, for I avoid fighting, purely to be serviceable to my friends, you know—

Sir G. Your friends are much obliged to you, sir: I hope you'll rank me in that number.

Mar. Sir George, a bow from the side-box, or to be seen in your chariot, binds me ever yours.

Sir G. Trifles; you may command 'em when you please.

Charles. Provided he may command you.

Mar. Me! why I live for no other purpose—Sir George, I have the honour to be caressed by most of the reigning toasts of the town: I'll tell 'em you are the finest gentleman—

Sir G. No, no, pr'ythee let me alone to tell the ladies—my parts—Can you convey a letter upon occasion, or deliver a message with an air of business, ha?

Mar. With the assurance of a page and the gravity of a statesman.

Sir G. You know Miranda?

Mar. What! my sister ward? why, her guardian is mine; we are fellow sufferers. Ah, he is a covetous, cheating, sanctified curmudgeon: that sir Francis Gripe is a damn'd old—hypocritical—

Charles. Hold, hold; I suppose, friend, you forget that he is my father.

Mar. I ask your pardon, Charles, but it is for your sake I hate him. Well, I say, the world is mistaken in him; his outside piety makes him every man's executor, and his inside cunning makes him every heir's gaoler. 'Egad, Charles, I'm half persuaded that thou'rt some ward too, and never of his getting—for never were two things so unlike as you and your father; he scrapes up every thing, and thou spend'st every thing; every body is indebted to him, and thou art indebted to every body.

Charles. You are very free, Mr. Marplot.

Mar. Ay, I give and take, Charles—you may be as free with me, you know.

Sir G. A pleasant fellow.

Charles. The dog is diverting sometimes, or there would be no enduring his impertinence. He is pressing to be employed, and willing to execute; but some ill fate generally attends all he undertakes, and he oftener spoils an intrigue than helps it.

Mar. I have always your good word, but if I mis-carry 'tis none of my fault; I follow my instructions.

Charles. Yes, witness the merchant's wife.

Mar. Pish, pox! that was an accident.

Sir G. What was it, pr'ythee?

Mar. Nay, Charles, now don't expose your friend.

Charles. Why, you must know I had lent a certain merchant my hunting horses, and was to have met his wife in his absence. Sending him along with my groom to make the compliment, and to deliver a letter to the lady at the same time, what does he do but gives the husband the letter and offers her the horses!

Mar. Why to be sure I did offer her the horses, and I remember you was even with me, for you denied the letter to be yours, and swore I had a design upon her, which my bones paid for.

Charles. Come, sir George, let's walk round if you are not engaged, for I have sent my man upon a little earnest business, and I have ordered him to bring me the answer into the Park.

Mar. Business! and I not know it! 'Egad I'll watch him.

[*Aside.*

Sir G. I must beg your pardon, Charles, I am to meet your father.

Charles. My father!

Sir G. Ay, and about the oddest bargain perhaps you ever heard of; but I'll not impart till I know the success.

Mar. What can his business be with sir Francis? Now would I give all the world to know it. Why the devil should not one know every man's concerns!

[*Aside.*

Charles. Prosperity to't, whate'er it be: I have private affairs too: over a bottle we'll compare notes.

Mar. Charles knows I love a glass as well as any man; I'll make one; shall it be to-night? I long to know their secrets.

[*Aside.*

Enter WHISPER.

Whis. Sir, sir, Mrs. Patch says Isabinda's Spanish

father has quite spoiled the plot, and she can't meet you in the Park, but he infallibly will go out this afternoon, she says: but I must step again to know the hour.

Mar. What did Whisper say now? I shall go stark mad if I'm not let into the secret. [Aside.

Charles. Curst misfortune!

Mar. Curst! what's curst, Charles?

Charles. Come along with me, my heart feels pleasure at her name. Sir George, yours; we'll meet at the old place, the usual hour.

Sir G. Agreed. I think I see sir Francis yonder. [Exit.

Charles. Marplot, you must excuse me; I am engag'd. [Exit.

Mar. Engag'd! 'Egad, I'll engage my life I'll know what your engagement is. [Exit.

Mir. Let the chair wait. My servant that dogg'd sir George said he was in the Park.

Enter PATCH.

Ha! miss Patch, alone! did not you tell me you had contrived a way to bring Isabinda to the Park?

Patch. Oh, madam, your ladyship can't imagine what a wretched disappointment we have met with! Just as I had fetch'd a suit of my clothes for a disguise, comes my old master into his closet, which is right against her chamber door: this struck us into a terrible fright—at length I put on a grave face, and asked him if he was at leisure for his chocolate? in hopes to draw him out of his hole; but he snapp'd my nose off: "No, I shall be busy here these two hours." At which my poor mistress, seeing no way of escape, ordered me to wait on your ladyship with the sad relation.

Mir. Unhappy Isabinda! was ever any thing so unaccountable as the humour of sir Jealous Traffick?

Patch. Oh, madam, it's his living so long in Spain; he vows he'll spend half his estate but he'll be a parliament man, on purpose to bring in a bill for women to wear veils, and other odious Spanish customs—He swears it is the height of impudence to have a woman seen barefaced even at church, and scarce believes there's a true begotten child in the city.

Mir. Ha, ha, ha! how the old fool torments himself! Suppose he could introduce his rigid rules——does he think we could not match them in contrivance? No, no; let the tyrant man make what laws he will, if there's a woman under the government, I warrant she finds a way to break 'em. Is his mind set upon the Spaniard for his son-in-law still?

Patch. Ay, and he expects him by the next fleet, which drives his daughter to melancholy and despair. But, madam, I find you retain the same gay cheerful spirit you had when I waited on your ladyship.—My lady is mighty good-humoured too, and I have found a way to make sir Jealous believe I am wholly in his interest, when my real design is to serve her: he makes me her gaoler, and I set her at liberty.

Mir. I knew thy prolific brain would be of singular service to her, or I had not parted with thee to her father.

Patch. But, madam, the report is that you are going to marry your guardian.

Mir. It is necessary such a report should be, Patch.

Patch. But is it true, madam?

Mir. That's not absolutely necessary.

Patch. I thought it was only the old strain, coaxing him still for your own, and railing at all the young fellows about town: in my mind now you are as ill plagu'd with your guardian, madam, as my lady is with her father.

Mir. No, I have liberty, wench; that she wants: what would she give now to be in this dishabille in the open air, nay, more, in pursuit of the young fellow she likes? for that's my case, I assure you.

Patch. As for that, madam, she's even with you; for though she can't come abroad, we have a way to bring him home in spite of old Argus.

Mir. Now, Patch, your opinion of my choice, for here he comes—Ha! my guardian with him! what can be the meaning of this? I'm sure sir Francis can't know me in this dress.—Let's observe 'em.

[*They withdraw.*]

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE and SIR GEORGE AIRY.

Sir F. Verily, sir George, thou wilt repent throwing away thy money so, for I tell thee sincerely, Miranda, my charge, does not like a young fellow; they are all vicious, and seldom make good husbands: in sober sadness she cannot abide 'em.

Mir. [Peeping] In sober sadness you are mistaken.—What can this mean?

Sir G. Lookye, sir Francis, whether she can or cannot abide young fellows is not the business: will you take the fifty guineas?

Sir F. In good truth I will not—for I knew thy father, he was a hearty wary man, and I cannot consent that his son should squander away what he saved to no purpose.

Mir. [Peeping] Now, in the name of wonder, what bargain can he be driving about me for fifty guineas?

Sir G. Well, sir Francis, since you are so conscientious for my father's sake, then permit me the favour gratis.

Sir F. No verily; if thou dost not buy thy experience thou wilt never be wise; therefore give me a hundred and try thy fortune.

Sir G. The scruples arose, I find, from the scanty sum—Let me see—a hundred guineas—*[Takes the Money out of a Purse, and chinks it]* Ha! they have a very pretty sound, and a very pleasing look—But then, Miranda—but if she should be cruel—

Sir F. Ay, do consider on't. He, he, he!

Sir G. No, I'll do't. Come, to the point; here's the gold; sum up the conditions.—

[Sir Francis pulls out a Paper.]

Mir. [Peeping] Ay, for heaven's sake do, for my expectation is on the rack.

Sir F. Well, at your peril be it.

Sir G. Ay, ay, go on.

Sir F. Imprimis, you are to be admitted into my house in order to move your suit to Miranda, for the space of ten minutes, without let or molestation, provided I remain in the same room.

Sir G. But out of ear-shot.

Sir F. Well, well, I don't desire to hear what you say; ha, ha, ha! in consideration I am to have that purse and a hundred guineas.

Sir G. Take it. [*Gives him the Purse*] And this agreement is to be performed to-day.

Sir F. Ay, ay; the sooner the better. Poor fool! how Miranda and I shall laugh at him! [*Aside*—Well, sir George, ha, ha, ha! take the last sound of your guineas, ha, ha, ha! [*Chinks them. Exit.*

Mir. [*Peeping*] Sure he does not know I am Miranda.

Sir G. A very extraordinary bargain I have made, truly; if she should be really in love with this old cuff now—Pshaw! that's morally impossible.—But then, what hopes have I to succeed? I never spoke to her—

Mir. [*Peeping*] Say you so? then I am safe.

Sir G. What though my tongue never spoke, my eyes said a thousand things, and my hopes flattered me her's answer'd 'em. If I'm lucky—if not, it is but a hundred guineas thrown away. [*Mir. comes forward.*

Mir. Upon what, sir George?

Sir G. Ha! my incognita—upon a woman, madam.

Mir. They are the worst things you can deal in, and damage the soonest; your very breath destroys 'em, and I fear you'll never see your return, sir George, ha, ha!

Sir G. Were they more brittle than china, and dropped to pieces with a touch, every atom of her I have ventur'd at, if she is but mistress of thy wit, balances ten times the sum.—Pr'ythee, let me see thy face.

Mir. By no means; that may spoil your opinion of my sense—

Sir G. Rather confirm it, madam.

Patch. So rob the lady of your gallantry, sir.

Sir G. No child, a dish of chocolate in the morning never spoils my dinner: the other lady I design for a set meal; so there's no danger.—

Mir. Matrimony! ha, ha, ha! what crimes have you committed against the god of love, that he should revenge 'em so severely, as to stamp husband on your forehead?

Sir G. For my folly, in having so often met you here without pursuing the laws of nature and exercising her command—But I resolve ere we part now to know who you are, where you live, what kind of flesh and blood your face is; therefore unmask, and don't put me to the trouble of doing it for you.

Mir. My face is the same flesh and blood with my hand, sir George; which if you'll be so rude to provoke—

Sir G. You'll apply it to my cheek—the ladies' favours are always welcome, but I must have that cloud withdrawn. [*Taking hold of her*] Remember you are in the Park, child; and what a terrible thing would it be to lose this pretty white hand!

Mir. And how will it sound in a chocolate-house, that sir George Airy rudely pulled off a lady's mask, when he had given her his honour that he never would, directly or indirectly, endeavour to know her till she gave him leave?

Sir G. But if that lady thinks fit to pursue and meet me at every turn, like some troubled spirit, shall I be blamed if I inquire into the reality? I would have nothing dissatisfied in a female shape.

Mir. What shall I do?

[*Pauses.*]

Sir G. Ay, pr'ythee, consider, for thou shalt find me very much at thy service.

Patch. Suppose, sir, the lady should be in love with you.

Sir G. Oh! I'll return the obligation in a moment.

Patch. And marry her?

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! that's not the way to love her, child.

Mir. If he discovers me I shall die—Which way shall I escape?—let me see.

[*Pauses.*]

Sir G. Well, madam—

Mir. I have it—Sir George, 'tis fit you should allow something; if you'll excuse my face, and turn your back (if you look upon me I shall sink, even masked as I am), I will confess why I have engaged you so often, who I am, and where I live.

Sir G. Well, to show you I am a man of honour, I

accept the conditions: let me but once know those, and the face won't be long a secret to me.

Patch. What mean you, madam?

Mir. To get off.

Sir G. 'Tis something indecent to turn one's back upon a lady; but you command, and I obey. [*Turns his back*] Come, madam, begin—

Mir. First, then, it was my unhappy lot to see you at Paris [*Draws back a little way, and speaks*] at a ball upon a birth-day; your shape and air charm'd my eyes, your wit and complaisance my soul, and from that fatal night I lov'd you. [*Drawing back.*

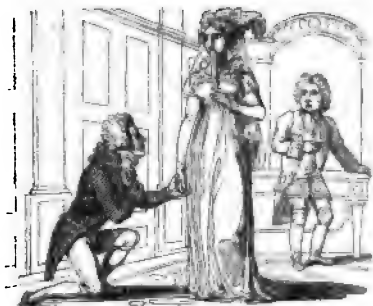
And when you left the place grief seiz'd me so,
Nor rest my heart nor sleep my eyes could know;
Last I resolv'd a hazardous point to try,
And quit the place in search of liberty.

[*Exit, followed by Patch.*

Sir G. Excellent—I hope she's handsome—Well now, madam, to the two other things, your name, and where you live—I am a gentleman, and this confession will not be lost upon me—Nay, pr'ythee, don't weep, but go on, for I find my heart melts in thy behalf—Speak quickly, or I shall turn about—Not yet—Poor lady! she expects I should comfort her, and to do her justice, she has said enough to encourage me. [*Turns about*] Ha! gone! the devil! jilted! Why, what a tale she has invented—of Paris, balls, and birth-days!—'Egad, I'd give ten guineas to know who the gipsy is—A curse of my folly—I deserve to lose her. What woman can forgive a man that turns his back!

The bold and resolute in love and war
To conquer take the right and swiftest way:
The boldest lover soonest gains the fair,
As courage makes the rudest force obey;
Take no denial, and the dames adore ye;
Closely pursue them, and they fall before ye. [*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.



SCENE I. *A Room in SIR FRANCIS GRIPE's House.*

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE and MIRANDA.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Mir. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! Oh! I shall die with laughing—the most romantic adventure—Ha, ha, ha! What does the odious young fop mean? A hundred pieces to talk ten minutes with me! ha, ha, ha, ha!

Sir F. And I am to be by too, there's the jest; adad, if it had been in private I should not have car'd to trust the young dog.

Mir. Indeed and indeed but you might, Gardy—Now methinks there's nobody handsomer than you: so neat, so clean, so good-humoured, and so loving—

Sir F. Pretty rogue, pretty rogue! and so thou shalt find me, if thou dost prefer thy Gardy before these caperers of the age: thou shalt outshine the queen's box on an opera night; thou shalt be the envy of the ring (for I will carry thee to Hyde-park), and thy equipage shall surpass the—what d'ye call 'em ambassador's.

Mir. Nay, I am sure the discreet part of my sex will

envy me more for the inside furniture, when you are in it, than my outside equipage.

Sir F. A cunning baggage, i'faith thou art, and a wise one too! and to show thee that thou hast not chose amiss, I'll this moment disinherit my son, and settle my whole estate upon thee.

Mir. There's an old rogue now. [*Aside*] No, Gardy, I would not have your name be so black in the world—You know my father's will runs that I am not to possess my estate, without your consent, till I am five-and-twenty; you shall only abate the odd seven years, and make me mistress of my estate to-day, and I'll make you master of my person to-morrow.

Sir F. Humph! that may not be safe—No, Chargy, I'll settle it upon thee for pin-money, and that will be every bit as well, thou know'st.

Mir. Unconscionable old wretch! bribe me with my own money!—Which way shall I get out of his hands? [*Aside.*]

Sir F. Well, what art thou thinking on, my girl, ha? how to banter sir George?

Mir. I must not pretend to banter; he knows my tongue too well. [*Aside*] No, Gardy, I have thought of a way will confound him more than all I could say, if I should talk to him seven years.

Sir F. How's that? oh! I'm transported, I'm ravish'd, I'm mad——

Mir. It would make you mad if you knew all. [*Aside*]. I'll not answer him a word, but be dumb to all he says.

Sir F. Dumb! good; ha, ha, ha! Excellent! ha, ha, ha, ha! I think I have you now, sir George. Dumb! he'll go distracted——well, she's the wittiest rogue.—Ha, ha, dumb! I can't but laugh, ha, ha! to think how damn'd mad he'll be when he finds he has given his money away for a dumb show! ha, ha, ha!

Mir. Nay, Gardy, if he did but know my thoughts of him it would make him ten times madder; ha, ha, ha, ha!

Sir F. Ay, so it would, Chargy, to hold him in such

derision, to scorn to answer him, to be dumb; ha, ha, ha!

Enter CHARLES.

Sir F. How now, sirrah! who let you in?

Charles. My necessities, sir.

Sir F. Your necessities are very importunate, and ought to have sent before they enter'd.

Charles. Sir, I know 'twas a word would gain admittance so where.

Sir F. Then, sirrah, how durst you rudely thrust that upon your father, which nobody else would admit?

Charles. Sure the name of a son is a sufficient plea. I ask this lady's pardon, if I have intruded.

Sir F. Ay, ay, ask her pardon and her blessing too, if you expect any thing from me.

Mir. I believe yours, sir Francis, in a purse of guineas, would be more material. Your son may have business with you; I'll retire.

Sir F. I guess his business, but I'll dispatch him; I expect the knight every minute: you'll be in readiness?

Mir. Certainly. My expectation is more upon the wing than yours, old gentleman. [*Aside, and exit.*]

Sir F. Well, sir.

Charles. Nay, it is very ill, sir; my circumstances are, I'm sure.

Sir F. And what's that to me, sir? your management should have made 'em better.

Charles. If you please to intrust me with the management of my estate I shall endeavour it, sir.

Sir F. What, to act upon a card, and buy a lady's favour at the price of a thousand pieces, to rig out an equipage for a wench, or by your carelessness to enrich your steward to fine for sheriff, or put up for a parliament man?

Charles. I hope I should not spend it this way: however I ask only for what my uncle left me; yours you may dispose of as you please, sir.

Sir F. That I shall, out of your reach, I assure you,

sir. Adad, these young fellows think old men get estates for nothing but them to squander away in dicing, wenching, drinking, dressing, and so forth.

Charles. I think I was born a gentleman, sir; I'm sure my uncle bred me like one.

Sir F. From which you would infer, sir, that gaming and wenching are requisites for a gentleman.

Charles. Monstrous! when I would ask him only for a support he falls into these unmannerly reproaches. I must, though against my will, employ invention, and by stratagem relieve myself. [*Aside.*]

Sir F. Sirrah, what is it you mutter, sirrah, ha? [*Holds up his Cane*] I say you shan't have a groat out of my hands till I please—and may be I'll never please; and what's that to you?

Charles. Nay, to be robb'd or have one's throat cut is not much——

Sir F. What's that, sirrah? would you rob me or cut my throat, you rogue?

Charles. Heaven forbid, sir!—I said no such thing.

Sir F. Mercy on me! what a plague it is to have a son of one-and-twenty, who wants to elbow one out of one's life to edge himself into the estate!

Enter MARPLOT.

Mar. 'Egad, he's here—I was afraid I had lost him: his secret could not be with his father; his wants are public there.—Guardian, your servant—O Charles, are you there? I know by that sorrowful countenance of thine, the old man's fist is as close as his strong box——But I'll help thee. [*Aside.*]

Sir F. So! here's another extravagant ooxcomb that will spend his fortune before he comes to't, but he shall pay swinging interest, and so let the fool go on.—Well, what does necessity bring you too, sir?

Mar. You have hit it, Guardian—I want a hundred pounds.

Sir F. For what?

Mar. Pugh! for a hundred things; I can't for my life tell you for what.

Charles. Sir, I suppose I have received all the answer I am like to have?

Mar. Oh, the devil! if he gets out before me I shall lose him again. *[Aside.*

Sir F. Ay, sir, and you may be marching as soon as you please—I must see a change in your temper, ere you find one in mine.

Mar. Pray, sir, dispatch me; the money, sir; I'm in mighty haste.

Sir F. Fool, take this and go to the cashier. I shan't be long plagu'd with thee *[Gives him a Note.*

Mar. Devil take the cashier! I shall certainly have Charles gone before I come back. *[Exit, running.*

Charles. Well, sir, I take my leave—but remember you expose an only son to all the miseries of wretched poverty, which too often lays the plan for scenes of mischief.

Sir F. Stay, Charles! I have a sudden thought come into my head, which may prove to thy advantage.

Charles. Ha! does he relent?

Sir F. My lady Wrinkle, worth forty thousand pounds, sets up for a handsome young husband; she prais'd thee t'other day; though the match-makers can get twenty guineas for a sight of her, I can introduce thee for nothing.

Charles. My lady Wrinkle, sir! why, she has but one eye.

Sir F. Then she'll see but half your extravagance, sir.

Charles. Condemn me to such a piece of deformity! a toothless, dirty, wry-neck'd, hunch-back'd hag!

Sir F. Hunch-back'd! so much the better! then she has a rest for her misfortunes, for thou wilt load her swingingly. Now, I warrant, you think this is no offer of a father; forty thousand pounds is nothing with you.

Charles. Yes, sir, I think it is too much; a young beautiful woman with half the money would be more agreeable.—I thank you, sir; but you choose better for yourself, I find.

Sir F. Out of my doors, you dog! you pretend to meddle with my marriage, sirrah!

Charles. Sir, I obey you, but—

Sir F. But me no buts—be gone, sir! dare to ask me for money again—refuse forty thousand pounds! Out of my doors, I say, without reply. *[Exit Charles.]*

Enter MARPLOT, running.

Mar. Ha! gone! is Charles gone, Gardy?

Sir F. Yes, and I desire your wise worship to walk after him.

Mar. Nay, 'egad I shall run, I tell you that. A pox of the cashier for detaining me so long! Where the devil shall I find him now? I shall certainly lose this secret, and I had rather by half lose my money—Where shall I find him now—D'ye know where Charles is gone, Gardy?

Sir F. Gone to the devil, and you may go after him.

Mar. Ay, that I will as fast as I can. *[Going, returns]* Have you any commands there, Gardy? *[Exit.]*

Sir F. What, is the fellow distracted?

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir George Airy inquires for you, sir.

Sir F. Desire sir George to walk up.—*[Exit Servant]*
—Now for a trial of skill that will make me happy and him a fool. Ha, ha, ha! In my mind he looks like an ass already.

Enter SIR GEORGE AIRY.

Well, sir George, do you hold in the same mind, or would you capitulate? ha, ha, ha! Look, here are the guineas; *[Chinks them]* ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. Not if they were twice the sum, sir Francis; therefore be brief, call in the lady, and take your post.

Sir F. Agreed. Miranda! *[Exit.]*

Sir G. If she's a woman, and not seduc'd by witchcraft, to this old rogue, I'll make his heart ache; for if she has but one grain of inclination about her, I'll vary a thousand shapes but find it.

Re-enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE and MIRANDA.

Sir G. So from the eastern chambers breaks the sun,
dispels the clouds, and gilds the vales below.

[Salutes her.]

Sir F. Hold, sir; kissing was not in our agreement.

Sir G. Oh! that's by way of prologue. Pr'ythee,
old mammon, to thy post.

Sir F. *[Takes out his Watch]* Well, young Timon,
'tis now four exactly; ten minutes, remember, is your
utmost limit; not a minute more.

[Retires to the Bottom of the Stage.]

Sir G. Madam, whether you'll excuse or blame my
love, the author of this rash proceeding depends upon
your pleasure, as also the life of your admirer; your
sparkling eyes speak a heart susceptible of love, your
vivacity a soul too delicate to admit the embraces of
decayed mortality. Shake off this tyrant guardian's
yoke; assume yourself, and dash his bold, aspiring
hopes. The deity of his desires is avarice, a heretic in
love, and ought to be banished by the queen of beauty.
See, madam, a faithful servant kneels, and begs to be
admitted in the number of your slaves.

[Miranda gives him her Hand to raise him.]

Sir F. *[Running up]* Hold, hold, hold! no palming;
that's contrary to articles——

Sir G. 'Sdeath, sir, keep your distance, or I'll write
another article in your guts. *[Lays his Hand to his Sword.]*

Sir F. *[Going back]* A bloody-minded fellow!

Sir G. Not answer me! perhaps she thinks my address
too grave: I'll be more free. *[Aside]* Can you be so
unconscionable, madam, to let me say all these fine
things to you without one single compliment in return?

Sir F. *[Running up with his Watch in his Hand]*
There's five of the ten minutes gone, sir George——
Adad, I don't like these close conferences——

Sir G. More interruptions—you will have it, sir!

[Lays his Hand to his Sword.]

Sir F. *[Going back]* No, no; you shan't have her
neither. *[Aside.]*

Sir G. Dumb still—sure this old dog has enjoin'd her silence. I'll try another way. [*Aside*] Madam, these few minutes cost me an hundred pounds—and would you answer me, I could purchase the whole day so. However, madam, you must give me leave to make the best interpretation I can for my money, and take the indication of your silence for the secret liking of my person; therefore, madam, I will instruct you how to keep your word inviolate to sir Francis, and yet answer me to every question: as for example, when I ask any thing to which you would reply in the affirmative, gently nod your head thus, [*Nods*] and when in the negative, thus, [*Shakes his Head*] and in the doubtful, a tender sigh thus. [*Sighs*].

Mir. How every action charms me—but I'll let him for signs, I warrant him. [*Aside*].

Sir G. Was it by his desire that you are dumb, madam, to all I can say? [*Miranda nods*] Very well, she's tractable, I find! [*Aside*] And is it possible that you can love him? [*Miranda nods*] Miraculous! Pardon the bluntness of my questions, for my time is short. May I not hope to supplant him in your esteem? [*Miranda sighs*] Good! she answers me as I could wish. [*Aside*] You'll not consent to marry him then? [*Miranda sighs*] How! doubtful in that?—Undone again—humph! but that may proceed from his power to keep her out of her estate 'till twenty-five: I'll try that. [*Aside*] Come, madam, I cannot think you hesitate in this affair out of any motive but your fortune—let him keep it till those few years are expired; make me happy with your person, let him enjoy your wealth. [*Miranda holds up her Hands*] Why, what sign is that now? Nay, nay, madam, except you observe my lesson I can't understand your meaning.

Sir F. What a vengeance! are they talking by signs? 'Ad, I may be fool'd here. [*Aside*] What do you mean, sir George?

Sir G. To cut your throat, if you dare mutter another syllable.

Sir F. 'Od, I wish he were fairly out of my house.

[*Aside.*

Sir G. Pray, madam, will you answer me to the purpose? [*Miranda shakes her Head, and points to Sir Francis*] What does she mean? She won't answer me to the purpose, or is she afraid you' old cuff should understand her signs?—ay, it must be that. [*Aside*] I perceive, madam, you are too apprehensive of the promise you have made to follow my rules, therefore I'll suppose your mind, and answer for you.—First for myself, madam; “that I am in love with you is an infallible truth.” Now for you. [*Turns on her Side*] “Indeed, sir! and may I believe it?”—“As certainly, madam, as that 'tis daylight, or that I die if you persist in silence.”—“Bless me with the music of your voice, and raise my spirits to their proper heaven. Thus low let me entreat ere I'm obliged to quit this place; grant me some token of a favourable reception to keep my hopes alive.” [*Arises hastily, and turns on her Side*] “Rise, sir, and since my guardian's presence will not allow me privilege of tongue, read that, and rest assur'd you are not indifferent to me.” [*Offers her a Letter, she strikes it down*] Ha, right woman! but no matter; I'll go on.

Sir F. Ha! what's that? a letter!—Ha, ha, ha! thou art balk'd.

Sir G. Ha! a letter! oh! let me kiss it with the same raptures that I would do the dear hand that touch'd it. [*Opens it*] Now for a quick fancy, and a long extempore.

Sir F. [*Coming up hastily*] The time is expired, sir, and you must take your leave. There, my girl, there's the hundred pounds which thou hast won. Go; I'll be with you presently; ha, ha, ha, ha! [*Exit Miranda.*

Sir G. Adsheart, madam, you won't leave me just in the nick, will you?

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! she has nick'd you, sir George, I think! ha, ha, ha! Have you any more hundred pounds to throw away upon courtship? ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. He, he, he, he! A curse of your fleeing jests! —Yet, however ill I succeeded, I'll venture the same

wager she does not value thee a spoonful of snuff—nay more, though you enjoin'd her silence to me, you'll never make her speak to the purpose with yourself.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! Did I not tell thee thou wouldst repent thy money? Did I not say she hated young fellows? ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. And I'm positive she's not in love with age.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! no matter for that, ha, ha! She's not taken with your youth, nor your rhetoric to boot; ha, ha!

Sir G. Whate'er her reasons are for disliking of me, I am certain she can be taken with nothing about thee.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! how he swells with envy—Poor man! poor man! ha, ha, ha! I must beg your pardon, sir George; Miranda will be impatient to have her share of mirth. Verily we shall laugh at thee most egregiously; ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. With all my heart, faith—I shall laugh in my turn too—for if you dare marry her, old Belzebub, you will be cuckolded most egregiously: remember that, and tremble.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK'S House.

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, ISABINDA, and PATCH, following.

Sir J. What, in the balcony again, notwithstanding my positive commands to the contrary?—Why don't you write a bill on your forehead to show passengers there's something to be let?

Isa. What harm can there be in a little fresh air, sir?

Sir J. Is your constitution so hot, mistress, that it wants cooling, ha? Apply the virtuous Spanish rules; banish your taste and thoughts of flesh, feed upon roots, and quench your thirst with water.

Isa. That, and a close room, would certainly make me die of the vapours.

Sir J. No, mistress, 'tis your high-fed, lusty, rambling, rampant ladies—that are troubled with the vapours: 'tis your ratafia, peraico, cinnamon, citrea,

and spirit of clara, cause such swimming in the brain, that carries many a guinea full tide to the doctor: but you are not to be bred this way: no galloping abroad, no receiving visits at home, for in our loose country the women are as dangerous as the men.

Patch. So I told her, sir, and that it was not decent to be seen in a balcony—but she threatened to slap my chops, and told me I was her servant, not her governess.

Sir J. Did she so? but I'll make her to know that you are her duenna. Oh, that incomparable custom of Spain! Why, here's no depending upon old women in my country—for they are as wanton at eighty as a girl of eighteen; and a man may as safely trust to Asgil's translation, as to his great grandmother's not marrying again.

Isa. Or to the Spanish ladies' veils and duennas for the safeguard of their honour.

Sir J. Dare to ridicule the cautious conduct of that wise nation, and I'll have you lock'd up this fortnight, without a peep-hole.

Isa. If we had but the ghostly helps in England which they have in Spain, I might deceive you if you did—Let me tell you, sir, confinement sharpens the invention, as want of sight strengthens the other senses, and is often more pernicious than the recreation that innocent liberty allows.

Sir J. Say you so, mistress! who the devil taught you the art of reasoning? I assure you they must have a greater faith than I pretend to, that can think any woman innocent who requires liberty; therefore, Patch, to your charge I give her; lock her up till I come back from 'Change. I shall have some sauntering coxcomb, with nothing but a red coat and a feather, think by leaping into her arms to leap into my estate—but I'll prevent them; she shall be only signior Babinetto's.

Patch. Really, sir, I wish you would employ any body else in this affair; I lead a life like a dog in obeying your commands. Come, madam, will you be locked up?

Isa. Ay, to enjoy more freedom than he is aware of.

[*Aside.* *Exit with Patch.*]

Sir J. I believe this wench is very true to my interest: I am happy I met with her, if I can but keep my daughter from being blown upon till signior Babinetto arrives, who shall marry her as soon as he comes, and carry her to Spain as soon as he has married her. She has a pregnant wit, and I'd no more have her an English wife than the grand signior's mistress. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.

Outside of SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK'S House.

Enter WHISPER.

Whis. So, there goes sir Jealous: where shall I find Mrs. Patch, now?

Enter PATCH.

Patch. Oh, Mr. Whisper! my lady saw you out of the window, and order'd me to bid you fly and let your master know she's now alone.

Whis. Hush! speak softly! I go, I go! But harkye, Mrs. Patch, shall not you and I have a little confabulation, when my master and your lady are engag'd?

Patch. Ay, ay; farowell.

[*Goes in and shuts the Door. Whisper peeps after her through the Key-hole.*]

Re-enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, meeting WHISPER.

Sir J. Sure, whilst I was talking with Mr. Tradewell, I heard my door clap. [*Seeing Whisper*] Ha! a man lurking about my house! Who do you want there, sir?

Whis. Want—want—a pox! Sir Jealous! What must I say now? [*Aside.*]

Sir J. Ay, want! Have you a letter or message for any body there?—O my conscience, this is some he bawd—

Whis. Letter or message, sir?

Sir J. Ay, letter or message, sir?

Whis. No, not I, sir.

Sir J. Sirrah, sirrah! I'll have you set in the stocks if you don't tell your business immediately.

Whis. Nay, sir, my business—is no great matter of business neither, and yet 'tis business of consequence too.

Sir J. Sirrah, don't trifle with me.

Whis. Trifle, sir! have you found him, sir?

Sir J. Found what, you rascal?

Whis. Why, Trifle is the very lapdog my lady lost, sir; I fancied I saw him run into this house. I'm glad you have him—Sir, my lady will be overjoy'd that I have found him.

Sir J. Who is your lady, friend?

Whis. My lady Lovepuppy, sir.

Sir J. My lady Lovepuppy, sir! then pr'ythee carry thyself to her, for I know of no other whelp that belongs to her; and let me catch you no more puppy-hunting about my doors, lest I have you press'd into the service, sirrah.

Whis. By no means, sir—Your humble servant.—I must watch whether he goes or no before I can tell my master. *[Aside. Exit.]*

Sir J. This fellow has the officious leer of a pimp, and I half suspect a design; but I'll be upon them before they think on me, I warrant 'em. *[Exit.]*

SCENE IV. CHARLES's Lodgings.

Enter CHARLES and MARPLOT.

Charles. Honest Marplot, I thank thee for this supply. I expect my lawyer with a thousand pounds I have ordered him to take up, and then you shall be repaid.

Mar. Pho, pho! no more of that. Here comes sir George Airy,

Enter SIR GEORGE AIRY.

cursedly out of humour at his disappointment. See how he looks! ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. Ah, Charles! I am so humbled in my pretensions to plots upon women, that I believe I shall never

have courage enough to attempt a chambermaid again
—I'll tell thee—

Charles. Ha, ha! I'll spare you the relation by telling you—Impatient to know your business with my father, when I saw you enter I slipp'd back into the next room, where I overheard every syllable.

Mar. Did you, Charles? I wish I had been with you.

Sir G. That I said—but I'll be hang'd if you heard her answer—But pr'ythee tell me, Charles, is she a fool?

Charles. I never suspected her for one; but Marplot can inform you better, if you'll allow him a judge.

Mar. A fool! I'll justify she has more wit than all the rest of her sex put together. Why, she'll rally me till I han't a word to say for myself.

Charles. A mighty proof of her wit, truly—

Mar. There must be some trick in't, sir George; 'egad, I'll find it out, if it cost me the sum you paid for't.

Sir G. Do, and command me—

Mar. Enough: let me alone to trace a secret—

Enter WHISPER, and speaks aside to his Master.

The devil! he here again! damn that fellow, he never speaks out. Is this the same, or a new secret? [*Aside*] You may speak out, here are none but friends.

Charles. Pardon me, Marplot, 'tis a secret.

Mar. A secret! ay, or eood I would not give a far-thing for it. Sir George, won't you ask Charles what news Whisper brings?

Sir G. Not I, sir; I suppose it does not relate to me.

Mar. Lord, Lord! how little curiosity some people have! Now my chief pleasure is in knowing every body's business.

Sir G. I fancy, Charles, thou hast some engagement upon thy hands?

Mar. Have you, Charles?

Sir G. I have a little business too.

Mar. Have you, sir George?

Sir G. Marplot, if it falls in your way to bring me

any intelligence from Miranda, you'll find me at the Thatch'd-house at six—

Mar. You do me much honour.

Charles. You guess right, sir George; wish me success.

Sir G. Better than attended me. Adieu. [Exit.

Charles. Marplot, you must excuse me—

Mar. Nay, nay; what need of any excuse amongst friends? I'll go with you.

Charles. Indeed you must not.

Mar. No! then I suppose 'tis a duel; and I will go to secure you.

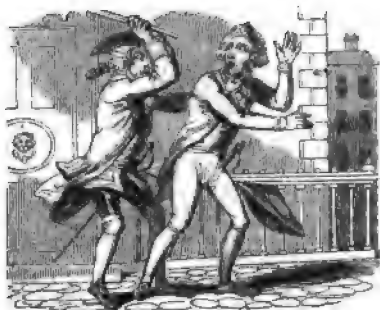
Charles. Well, but 'tis no duel, consequently no danger; therefore pr'ythee be answer'd.

Mar. What, is't a mistress then?—Mum—you know I can be silent upon occasion.

Charles. I wish you could be civil too: I tell you, you neither must nor shall go with me. Farewell.

Mar. Why then—I must and will follow you. [Exit.

ACT THE THIRD.



SCENE I. A Street.

Enter CHARLES.

Charles. Well, here's the house which holds the lovely prize, quiet and serene: here no noisy footmen throug to tell the world that beauty dwells within, no ceremonious visit makes the lover wait, no rival to give my heart a pang. Who would not scale the window at midnight without fear of the jealous father's pistol, rather than fill up the train of a coquette, where every minute he is jostled out of place? [*Knocks softly*] Mrs. Patch! Mrs. Patch!

Enter PATCH.

Patch. Oh, are you come, sir? All's safe.

Charles. So in, in then. [*They go in.*]

Enter MARPLOT.

Mar. There he goes! Who the devil lives here? Except I find out that, I am as far from knowing his business as ever. 'Gad, I'll watch; it may be a bawdy-house, and he may have his throat cut. If there should

be any mischief, I can make oath he went in. Well, Charles, in spite of your endeavours to keep me out of the secret, I may save your life for aught I know. At that corner I'll plant myself; there I shall see whoever goes in or comes out. 'Gad, I love discoveries. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

A Chamber in the House of Sir JEALOUS TRAFFICK.

CHARLES, ISABINDA, and PATCH discovered.

Isa. Patch, look out sharp; have a care of dad.

Patch. I warrant you.

Isa. Well, sir, if I may judge your love by your courage, I ought to believe you sincere; for you venture into the lion's den when you come to see me.

Charles. If you'll consent whilst the furious beast is abroad, I'd free you from the reach of his paws.

Isa. That would be but to avoid one danger by running into another, like poor wretches who fly the burning ship, and meet their fate in the water. Come, come, Charles, I fear, if I consult my reason, confinement and plenty is better than liberty and starving. I know you would make the frolic pleasing for a little time, by saying and doing a world of tender things; but when our small substance is exhausted, and a thousand requisites for life are wanting, love, who rarely dwells with poverty, would also fail us.

Charles. 'Faith, I fancy not; methinks my heart has laid up a stock will last for life, to back which I have taken a thousand pounds upon my uncle's estate; that surely will support us till one of our father's relent.

Isa. There's no trusting to that, my friend; I doubt your father will carry his humour to the grave, and mine till he sees me settled in Spain.

Charles. And can you then cruelly resolve to stay till that curs'd don arrives, and suffer that youth, beauty, fire, and wit to be sacrific'd to the arms of a dull Spaniard, to be immured, and forbid the sight of any thing that's human?

Isa. No; when it comes to that extremity, and no

stratagem can relieve us, thou shalt list for a soldier, and I'll carry thy knapsack after thee.

Charles. Bravely resolv'd! the world cannot be more savage than our parents, and fortune generally assists the bold, therefore consent now: why should she put it to a future hazard? who knows when we shall have another opportunity?

Isa. Oh, you have your ladder of ropes, I suppose, and the closet window stands just where it did; and if you han't forgot to write in characters, Patch will find a way for our assignations. Thus much of the Spanish contrivance my father's severity has taught me; I thank him: though I hate the nation, I admire their management in these affairs.

Enter PATCH.

Patch. Oh, madam! I see my master coming up the street.

Charles. Oh, the devil! 'would I had my ladder now! I thought you had not expected him till night. Why, why, why, why, what shall I do, madam?

Isa. Oh! for heaven's sake, don't go that way; you'll meet him full in the teeth. Oh, unlucky moment!

Charles. 'Adsheart! can you shut me into no cupboard, nor ram me into a chest, ha?

Patch. Impossible, sir; he searches every hole in the house.

Isa. Undone for ever! If he sees you I shall never see you more.

Patch. I have thought on it; run you to your chamber, madam; and, sir, come you along with me; I'm certain you may easily get down from the balcony.

Charles. My life! adieu—Lead on, guide.

[Exeunt Patch and Charles.]

Isa. Heavens preserve him.

[Exit.]

SCENE III. *The Street.*

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, followed by MARPLOT.

Sir J. I don't know what's the matter, but I have a strong suspicion all is not right within; that fellow's

sauntering about my door, and his tale of a puppy, had the face of a lie, methought. By St. Iago, if I should find a man in the house I'd make mince-meat of him——

Mar. Mince-meat! Ah, poor Charles! how I sweat for thee! 'Egad, he's old—I fancy I might bully him, and make Charles have an opinion of my courage. 'Egad, I'll pluck up, and have a touch with him.

Sir J. My own key shall let me in; I'll give them no warning.

[Feeling for his Key.]

Mar. What's that you say, sir?

[Going up to Sir Jealous.]

Sir J. What's that to you, sir?

[Turns quick upon him.]

Mar. Yes, 'tis to me, sir; for the gentleman you threaten is a very honest gentleman. Look to't; for if he comes not as safe out of your house as he went in——

Sir J. What, is he in then?

Mar. Yes, sir, he is in then; and I say if he does not come out, I have half a dozen myrmidons hard by shall beat your house about your ears.

Sir J. Ah! a combination to undo me—I'll myrmidon you, ye dog, you—Thieves! thieves!

[Beats Marplot.]

Mar. Murder, murder! I was not in your house, sir.

Enter Servant.

Serv. What's the matter, sir?

Sir J. The matter, rascal! you have let a man into my house; but I'll flay him alive. Follow me; I'll not leave a mouse-hole unsearch'd. If I find him, by St. Iago, I'll equip him for the opera.

Mar. A deuce of his cane! there's no trusting to age—What shall I do to relieve Charles? 'egad, I'll raise the neighbourhood.—Murder! murder!——*[Charles drops down upon him from the Balcony]* Charles! faith, I'm glad to see thee safe out, with all my heart!

Charles. A pox of your bawling! how the devil came you here?

Mar. 'Egad, it's very well for you that I was here; I have done you a piece of service: I told the old thunderbolt that the gentleman that was gone in was——

Charles. Was it you that told him, sir? [*Laying hold of him*] 'Sdeath! I could crush thee into atoms. [*Exit.*

Mar. What! will you choke me for my kindness?—Will my inquiring soul never leave searching into other people's affairs till it gets squeez'd out of my body? I dare not follow him now for my blood, he's in such a passion.—I'll go to Miranda; if I can discover aught that may oblige sir George, it may be a means to reconcile me again to Charles.

Sir J. [*Within*] Look about! search, find him out!

Mar. Oh, the devil! there's old Crabstick again.

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

A Hall in the House of SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK.

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK and his Servants.

Sir J. Are you sure you have search'd every where?

Serv. Yes, from the top of the house to the bottom.

Sir J. Under the beds and over the beds?

Serv. Yes, and in them too, but found nobody, sir.

Sir J. Why, what could this rogue mean?

Enter ISABINDA and PATCH.

Patch. Take courage, madam; I saw him safe out.

[*Aside to Isabinda.*

Isa. Bless me! what's the matter, sir?

Sir J. You know best—Pray where's the man that was here just now?

Isa. What man, sir? I saw none.

Patch. Nor I, by the trust you repose in me. Do you think I would let a man come within these doors when you are absent?

Sir J. Ah, Patch! she may be too cunning for thy honesty: the very scout that he had set to give warning discovered it to me—and threatened me with half a dozen myrmidons—but I think I maul'd the villain. These afflictions you draw upon me, mistress.

Isa. Pardon me, sir, 'tis your own ridiculous humour draws you into these vexations, and gives every fool pretence to banter you.

Sir J. No, 'tis your idle conduct, your coquettish

flirting into the balcony—Oh! with what joy shall I resign thee into the arms of don Diego Babinetto!

Isa. And with what industry shall I avoid him.

[*Aside.*

Sir J. Certainly that rogue had a message from somebody or other, but being balk'd by my coming popp'd that sham upon me. Come along, ye sots, let's see if we can find the dog again. Patch, lock her up, d'ye hear?

[*Exeunt Sir Jealous and Servants.*

Patch. Yes, sir—Ay, walk till your heels ache, you'll find nobody, I promise you.

Isa. Who could that scout be he talks of?

Patch. Nay, I can't imagine, without it was Whisper.

Isa. Well, dear Patch! let's employ all our thoughts how to escape this horrid don Diego; my very heart sinks at his terrible name.

Patch. Fear not, madam; don Carlo shall be the man, or I'll lose the reputation of contriving; and then what's a chambermaid good for?

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. SIR FRANCIS GRIPE'S House.

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE and MIRANDA.

Mir. Well, Gardy, how did I perform the dumb scene.

Sir F. To admiration—Thou dear little rogue! let me buss thee for it: nay, adad I will, Chargy, so muzzle, and tuzzle, and hug thee; I will, i'faith, I will.

[*Hugging and kissing her.*

Mir. Nay, Gardy, don't be so lavish. Who would ride post when the journey lasts for life?

Sir F. Oh, I'm transported! When, when, my dear! wilt thou convince the world of the happy day? when shall we marry, ha?

Mir. There's nothing wanting but your consent, sir Francis.

Sir F. My consent! what does my charmer mean?

Mir. Nay, 'tis only a whim; but I'll have every thing according to form—therefore when you sign an authentic paper, drawn up by an able lawyer, that I have your leave to marry, the next day makes me yours, Gardy.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! a whim indeed! why, is it not demonstration I give my leave when I marry thee?

Mir. Not for your reputation, Gardy; the malicious world will be apt to say you trick me into marriage, and so take the merit from my choice: now I will have the act my own, to let the idle fops see how much I prefer a man loaded with years and wisdom.

Sir F. Humph! Pr'ythee leave out years, Chargy; I'm not so old, as thou shalt find. Adad, I'm young: there's a caper for ye! *[Jumps.]*

Mir. Oh, never excuse it; why I like you the better for being old—but I shall suspect you don't love me if you refuse me this formality.

Sir F. Not love thee, Chargy! Adad, I do love thee better than, than, than, better than——what shall I say? 'egad, better than money; i'faith I do——

Mir. That's false, I'm sure. *[Aside]* To prove it do this then.

Sir F. Well, I will do it, Chargy, provided I bring a licence at the same time.

Mir. Ay, and a parson too, if you please. Ha, ha, ha! I can't help laughing to think how all the young coxcombs about town will be mortified when they hear of our marriage.

Sir F. So they will, so they will! ha, ha ha!

Mir. Well, I fancy I shall be so happy with my Gardy—

Sir F. If wearing pearls and jewels, or eating gold, as the old saying is, can make thee happy, thou shalt be so, my sweetest, my lovely, my charming, my—verily I know not what to call thee.

Mir. You must know, Gardy, that I am so eager to have this business concluded, that I have employed my woman's brother, who is a lawyer in the Temple, to settle matters just to your liking; you are to give your consent to my marriage, which is to yourself you know: but, mum, you must take no notice of that. So then I will, that is, with your leave, put my writings into his hands; then to-morrow we come slap upon them with a wedding that nobody thought on, by which you seize

me and my estate, and I suppose make a benefice of your own act and deed.

Sir F. Nay but, Chargy, if—

Mir. Nay, Gardy, no ifs.—Have I refus'd three northern lords, two British peers, and half a score knights, to have put in your ifs?

Sir F. So thou hast indeed, and I will trust to thy management. 'Od, I'm all of a fire.

Mir. 'Tis a wonder the dry stubble does not blaze.

[*Aside.*]

Enter MARPLOT.

Sir F. How now, who sent for you, sir? What is the hundred pounds gone already?

Mar. No, sir; I don't want money now, Gardy.

Sir F. No, that's a miracle! but there's one thing you want, I'm sure.

Mar. Ay, what's that?

Sir F. Manners! What, had I no servants without?

Mar. None that could do my business, guardian, which is at present with this lady.

Mir. With me, Mr. Marplot? what is it, I beseech you?

Sir F. Ay, sir, what is it? any thing that relates to her, may be delivered to me.

Mar. I deny that.

Mir. That's more than I do, sir.

Mar. Indeed, madam! Why then to proceed: Fame says, you know best whether she tells truth or not, that you and my most conscionable guardian here design'd, contriv'd, plotted, and agreed to cheat a very civil, honest, honourable gentleman out of a hundred pounds: guilty or not?

Mir. That I contriv'd it!

Mar. Ay, you—you said never a word against it; so far you are guilty.

Sir F. Pray tell that civil, honest, honourable gentleman, that if he has any more such sums to fool away, they shall be received like the last; ha, ha, ha! Chous'd, quotha! But, harkye, let him know at the same time, that if he dare to report I trick'd him of it, I shall recommend a lawyer to him, who shall show him a trick for twice as much. D'ye hear? tell him that.

Mar. So, and this is the way you use a gentleman, and my friend!

Mir. Is the wretch thy friend?

Mar. The wretch! lookye, madam, don't call names; 'egad, I won't take it.

Mir. Why, you won't beat me, will you? Ha, ha!

Mar. I don't know whether I will or no.

Sir F. Sir, I shall make a servant show you out at the window if you are saucy.

Mar. I am your most humble servant, guardian; I design to go out the same way I came in. I would only ask this lady one question. Don't you think he's a fine gentleman?

Sir F. Who's a fine gentleman?

Mar. Not you, Gardy, not you! Don't you think, in your soul, that sir George Airy is a very fine gentleman?

Mir. He dresses well.

Sir F. Which is chiefly owing to his tailor and valet de chambre.

Mar. Well! and who is your dress owing to, ha? There's a beau, ma'am—do but look at him!

Sir F. Sirrah!

Mir. And if being a beau be a proof of his being a fine gentleman, he may be so.

Mar. He may be so! Why, ma'am, the judicious part of the world allow him wit, courage, gallantry, ay, and economy too, though I think he forfeited that character when he flung away a hundred pounds upon your dumb ladyship.

Sir F. Does that gall him? Ha, ha, ha!

Mir. So, sir George, remaining in deep discontent, has sent you, his trusty squire, to utter his complaint. Ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Yes, madam! and you, like a cruel hard-hearted Jew, value it no more—than I would your ladyship, were I sir George; you, you, you——

Mir. Oh, don't call names: I know you love to be employed, and I'll oblige you, and you shall carry him a message from me.

Mar. According as I like it. What is it?

Mir. Nay, a kindness, you may be sure—First, tell him I have chose this gentleman, to have and to hold, and so forth.

[*Taking the Hand of Sir F.*]

Mar. Much good may he do you!

Sir F. Oh, the dear rogue! how I dote on her! [*Aside.*]

Mir. And advise his impertinence to trouble me no more, for I prefer sir Francis for a husband before all the fops in the universe.

Mar. Oh Lord, oh Lord! she's bewitched, that's certain. Here's a husband for eighteen—here's a tit-bit for a young lady—here's a shape, an air, and a grace—here's bones rattling in a leathern bag—[*Turning Sir Francis about*] here's buckram and canvass to scrub you to repentance.

Sir F. Sirrah, my cane shall teach you repentance presently.

Mar. No, faith, I have felt its twin brother from just such a wither'd hand too lately.

Mir. One thing more; advise him to keep from the garden-gate on the left hand, for if he dare to saunter there, about the hour of eight, as he us'd to do, he shall be saluted with a pistol or a blunderbuss.

Sir F. Oh, monstrous! Why, Chargy, did he use to come to the garden-gate?

Mir. The gardener describ'd just such another man that always watch'd his coming out, and fain would have brib'd him for his entrance—Tell him he shall find a warm reception if he comes this night.

Mar. Pistols and blunderbusses! 'Egad, a warm reception indeed! I shall take care to inform him of your kindness, and advise him to keep further off.

Mir. I hope he will understand my meaning better than to follow your advice.

[*Aside.*]

Sir F. Thou hast sign'd, seal'd, and ta'en possession of my heart for ever, Chargy, ha, ha, ha! and for you, Mr. Saucebox, let me have no more of your messages, if ever you design to inherit your estate, gentleman.

Mar. Why, there 'tis now. Sure I shall be out of your clutches one day—Well, guardian, I say no more: but if you be not as arrant a cuckold as e'er drove

bargain upon the Exchange, or paid attendance to a court, I am the son of a whetstone; and so your humble servant.

Mir. Mr. Marplot, don't forget the message: ha, ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Nang, nang, nang!

[*Exit.*]

Sir F. I am so provok'd—'tis well he's gone.

Mir. Oh, mind him not, Gardy, but let's sign articles, and then—

Sir F. And then—Adad, I believe I am metamorphos'd, my pulse beats high, and my blood boils, methinks—

[*Kissing and hugging her.*]

Mir. Oh, fie, Gardy! be not so violent: consider the market lasts all the year.—Well, I'll in, and see if the lawyer be come: you'll follow.

[*Exit.*]

Sir F. Ay, to the world's end, my dear! Well, Frank, thou art a lucky fellow in thy old age to have such a delicate morsel, and thirty thousand pounds, in love with thee. I shall be the envy of bachelors, the glory of married men, and the wonder of the town. Some guardians would be glad to compound for part of the estate at dispatching an heiress, but I engross the whole. O! mihi præteritos referet si Jupiter annos. [*Exit.*]

SCENE VI. A Tavern.

SIR GEORGE AIRY and CHARLES discovered, with Wine, Pens, Ink, and Paper on the Table. WHISPER waiting.

Sir G. Nay, pr'ythee, don't be grave, Charles: misfortunes will happen. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis some comfort to have a companion in our sufferings.

Charles. I am only apprehensive for Isabinda; her father's humour is implacable; and how far his jealousy may transport him to her undoing, shocks my soul to think.

Sir G. But since you escap'd undiscover'd by him, his rage will quickly lash into a calm, never fear it.

Charles. But who knows what that unlucky dog, Marplot, told him; nor can I imagine what brought

him thither: that fellow is ever doing mischief; and yet, to give him his due, he never designs it. This is some blundering adventure wherein he thought to show his friendship, as he calls it! a curse on him!

Sir G. Then you must forgive him. What said he?

Charles. Said! nay, I had more mind to cut his throat, than to hear his excuses.

Sir G. Where is he?

Whis. Sir, Legaw him go into sir Francis Gripe's, just now.

Charles. Oh! then he's upon your business, sir George: a thousand to one but he makes some mistake there too.

Sir G. Impossible, without he huffs the lady, and makes love to sir Francis.

Enter Drawer.

Draw. Mr. Marplot is below, gentlemen, and desires to know if he may have leave to wait upon ye.

Charles. How civil the rogue is when he has done a fault!

Sir G. Ho! desire him to walk up. [*Exit Drawer*] Pr'ythee, Charles, throw off this chagrin, and be good company.

Charles. Nay, hang him, I'm not angry with him.

Enter MARPLOT.

Do but mark his sheepish look, sir George.

Mar. Dear Charles! don't overwhelm a man already under insupportable affliction. I'm sure I always intend to serve my friends; but if my malicious stars deny the happiness, is the fault mine?

Sir G. Never mind him, Mr. Marplot; he's eat up with spleen. But tell me what says Miranda?

Mar. Says!—nay, we are all undone there too.

Charles. I told you so; nothing prospers that he undertakes.

Mar. Why, can I help her having chose your father for better for worse?

Charles. So; there's another of fortune's strokes. I suppose I shall be edged out of my estate with twins every year, let who will get 'em.

Sir G. What! is the woman really possess'd?

Mar. Yes, with the spirit of contradiction: she railed at you most prodigiously.

Sir G. That's no ill sign.

Mar. You'd say it was no good sign if you knew all.

Sir G. Why, pr'ythee?

Mar. Hark'e, sir George, let me warn you; pursue your old haunt no more; it may be dangerous.

[*Charles sits down to write.*]

Sir G. My old haunt! what do you mean?

Mar. Why, in short then, since you will have it, Miranda vows if you dare approach the garden-gate at eight o'clock, as you us'd, you shall meet with a warm reception.

Sir G. A warm reception!

Mar. Ay, a very warm reception—you shall be saluted with a blunderbuss, sir. These were her very words: nay, she bid me tell you so too.

Sir G. Ha! the garden-gate at eight, as I us'd to do! There must be meaning in this. Is there such a gate, Charles?

Mar. Is there such a gate, Charles?

Charles. Yes, yes, it opens into the Park: I suppose her ladyship has made many a scamper through it.

Sir G. It must be an assignation then. Ha! my heart springs for joy; 'tis a propitious omen. My dear Marplot! let me embrace thee; thou art my friend, my better angel.

Mar. What do you mean, sir George?

Sir G. No matter what I mean. Here, take a bumper to the garden-gate, you dear rogue, you!

Mar. You have reason to be transported, sir George; I have sav'd your life.

Sir G. My life! thou hast sav'd my soul, man. Charles, if thou dost not pledge this health, may'st thou never taste the joys of love.

Charles. Whisper, be sure you take care how you deliver this. [*Gives him a Letter*] Bring me the answer to my lodgings.

Whis. I warrant you, sir.

Mar. Whither does that letter go? Now dare I not

ask for my blood—That fellow knows more secrets than I do.—[*Aside. Following Whisper as he is going*]—Whisper! Whisper!

Whis. Sir.

Mar. Whisper, here's half a crown for you.

Whis. Thank ye, sir.

Mar. Now where is that letter going?

Whis. Into my pocket, sir.

[*Exit.*]

Charles. Now I'm for you.

Sir G. To the garden-gate at the hour of eight,
Charles: allons; huzza!

Charles. I begin to conceive you.

Mar. That's more than I do, 'egad—To the garden-gate, huzza! [*Drinks*] But I hope you design to keep far enough off on't, sir George.

Sir G. Ay, ay, never fear that; she shall see I despise her frowns; let her use the blunderbuss against the next fool; she shan't reach me with the smoke, I warrant her; ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Ah, Charles! if you could receive a disappointment thus en cavalier, one should have some comfort in being beat for you.

Charles. The fool comprehends nothing.

Sir G. Nor would I have him. Pr'ythee, take him along with thee.

Charles. Enough.

Sir G. I kiss both your hands—And now for the garden-gate.

It's beauty gives the assignation there,

And love too powerful grows t' admit of fear. [*Exit.*]

Charles. Come, you shall go home with me.

Mar. Shall I! and are we friends, Charles?—I am glad of it.

Charles. Come along.

[*Exit.*]

Mar. 'Egad, Charles's asking me to go home with him gives me a shrewd suspicion there's more in the garden-gate than I comprehend. Faith, I'll give him the drop, and away to Gardy's and find it out. [*Exit.*]

ACT THE FOURTH.



SCENE I. *The outside of SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK'S House; PATCH peeping out of the Door.*

Enter WHISPER.

Whis. Ha! Mrs. Patch, this is a lucky minute, to find you so readily; my master dies with impatience.

Patch. My lady imagin'd so, and by her orders I have been scouting this hour in search of you, to inform you that air Jealous has invited some friends to supper with him to-night, which gives an opportunity to your master to make use of his ladder of ropes. The closet window shall be open, and Isabinda ready to receive him. Bid him come immediately.

Whis. Excellent! he'll not disappoint, I warrant him.—But hold, I have a letter here which I'm to carry, an answer to. I cannot think what language the direction is.

Patch. Pho! 'tis no language, but a character which the lovers invented to avert discovery—Ha! I hear my old master coming down stairs; it is impossible you should have an answer: away, and bid him come himself for that. Be gone, we're ruin'd if you're seen, for he has doubled his care since the last accident.

Whis. I go, I go.

[Exit.

Patch. There, go thou into my pocket. [Puts it aside, and it falls down] Now I'll up the back stairs lest I meet him—Well, a dextrous chambermaid is the ladies' best utensil, I say.

[Exit.

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, with a Letter in his Hand.

Sir J. So, this is some comfort; this tells me that signior don Diego Babinetto is safely arriv'd. He shall marry my daughter the minute he comes—Ha, ha! what's here? [Takes up the Letter Patch dropped] A letter! I don't know what to make of the superscription. I'll see what's withinside. [Opens it]—Humph—'tis Hebrew, I think. What can this mean?—There must be some trick in it. This was certainly design'd for my daughter; but I don't know that she can speak any language but her mother tongue.—No matter for that; this may be one of love's hieroglyphics; and I fancy I saw Patch's tail sweep by: that wench may be a slut, and instead of guarding my honour betray it. I'll find it out, I'm resolv'd—Who's there?

Enter Servant.

What answer did you bring from the gentleman I sent you to invite?

Serv. That they'd all wait on you, sir, as I told you before; but I suppose you forgot, sir.

Sir J. Did I so, sir? but I shan't forget to break your head if any of them come, sir.

Serv. Come, sir! why, did not you send me to desire their company, sir?

Sir J. But I send you now to desire their absence. Say I have something extraordinary fallen out, which calls me abroad contrary to expectation, and ask their pardon; and, d'ye hear, send the butler to me.

Serv. Yes, sir.

[Exit.

Enter Butler.

Sir J. If this paper has a meaning I'll find it—Lay the cloth in my daughter's chamber, and bid the cook send supper thither presently.

Patch. So all's right again thus far. [*Aside.*

Isa. I would not lose *Patch* for the world—I'll take courage a little. [*Aside*] Is this usage for your daughter, sir? must my virtue and conduct be suspected for every trifle? You immure me like some dire offender here, and deny me all the recreations which my sex enjoy, and the custom of the country and modesty allow; yet not content with that, you make my confinement more intolerable by your mistrusts and jealousies. Would I were dead, so I were free from this.

Sir J. To-morrow rids you of this tiresome load: don *Diego Babinetto* will be here, and then my care ends and his begins.

Isa. Is he come then?—Oh, how shall I avoid this hated marriage! [*Aside.*

Enter Servants, with Supper.

Sir J. Come, will you sit down?

Isa. I can't eat, sir.

Patch. No, I dare swear he has given her supper enough. I wish I could get into the closet. [*Aside.*

Sir J. Well, if you can't eat, then give me a song, whilst I do.

Isa. I have such a cold I can scarce speak, sir, much less sing.—How shall I prevent *Charles's* coming in? [*Aside.*

Sir J. I hope you have the use of your fingers, madam. Play a tune upon your spinnet whilst your woman sings me a song.

Patch. I'm as much out of tune as my lady, if he knew all. [*Aside.*

Isa. I shall make excellent music. [*Sits down to play.*

Patch. Really, sir, I am so frighten'd about your opening this charm that I can't remember one song.

Sir J. Pish! hang your charm! come, come, sing any thing.

Patch. Yes, I'm likely to sing, truly. [*Aside*] Humph, humph; bless, me! I can't raise my voice, my heart pants so.

Sir J. Why, what does your heart pant so that you can't play neither? Pray what key are you in, ha?

Patch. Ah, would the key was turn'd on you once.

[*Aside.*]

Sir J. Why don't you sing, I say?

Patch. When madam has put her spinnet in tune, sir: humph, humph—

Isa. I cannot play, sir, whatever ails me. [*Rising.*]

Sir J. Zounds! sit down and play me a tune, or I'll break the spinnet about your ears.

Isa. What will become of me? [*Sits down and plays.*]

Sir J. Come, mistress.

[*To Patch.*]

Patch. Yes, sir. [*Sings, but horribly out of tune.*]

Sir J. Hey, hey! why, you are a-top of the house, and you are down in the cellar. What is the meaning of this? is it on purpose to cross me, ha?

Patch. Pray, madam, take it a little lower; I cannot reach that note—nor any note, I fear.

Isa. Well, begin—Oh, Patch, we shall be discover'd.

[*Aside.*]

Patch. I sink with apprehension, madam. [*Aside*]—Humph, humph. [*Sings. Charles opens the Closet-door.*]

Charles. Music and singing! Death! her father there! [*The Women shriek*] Then I must fly—

[*Exit into the Closet. Sir Jealous rises up hastily, seeing Charles slip back into the Closet.*]

Sir J. Hell and furies! a man in the closet!—

Patch. Ah! a ghost! a ghost!—He must not enter the closet.

[*Isabinda throws herself down before the Closet-door as in a swoon.*]

Sir J. The devil! I'll make a ghost of him, I warrant you.

[*Strives to get by.*]

Patch. Oh, hold, sir, have a care; you'll tread upon my lady—Who waits there? bring some water. Oh, this comes of your opening the charm. Oh, oh, oh, oh!

[*Weeps aloud.*]

Sir J. I'll charm you, housewife. Here lies the charm that conjur'd this fellow in, I'm sure on't. Come out, you rascal, do so. Zounds! take her from the door or I'll spurn her from it, and break your neck down stairs. Where are you, sirrah? Villain! robber of my honour! I'll pull you out of your nest. [*Goes into the Closet.*]

Patch. You'll be mistaken, old gentleman; the bird is flown.

Isa. I'm glad I have 'scap'd so well; I was almost dead in earnest with the fright.

Re-enter SIR JEALOUS out of the Closet.

Sir J. Whoever the dog were he has escap'd out of the window, for the sash is up: but though he is got out of my reach you are not. And first, Mrs. Pander, with your charms for the tooth-ache, get out of my house, go, troop; yet hold, stay, I'll see you out of doors myself; but I'll secure your charge ere I go.

Isa. What do you mean, sir? was she not a creature of your own providing?

Sir J. She was of the devil's providing, for aught I know.

Patch. What have I done, sir, to merit your displeasure?

Sir J. I don't know which of you have done it, but you shall both suffer for it, till I can discover whose guilt it is. Go, get in there; I'll move you from this side of the house. [*Pushes Isabinda in at the Door and locks it, puts the Key in his Pocket*] I'll keep the key myself; I'll try what ghost will get into that room: and now forsooth I'll wait on you down stairs.

Patch. Ah, my poor lady!—Down stairs, sir! but I won't go out, sir, till I have lock'd up my clothes, and that's flat.

Sir J. If thou wert as naked as thou wert born, thou shouldst not stay to put on a smock, and that's flat.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *The Street.*

Sir J. [*Putting Patch out at the Door*] There, go and come no more within sight of my habitation these three days, I charge you. [*Slaps the Door after her.*]

Patch. Did ever any body see such an old monster!

Enter CHARLES.

Oh, Mr. Charles! your affairs and mine are in an ill posture.

Charles. I am inur'd to the frowns of fortune; but what has befall'n thee?

Patch. Sir Jealous, whose suspicious nature is always on the watch, nay, even while one eye sleeps the other keeps sentinel, upon sight of you flew into such a violent passion, that I could find no stratagem to appease him, but in spite of all arguments he lock'd his daughter into his own apartment, and turn'd me out of doors.

Charles. Ha! oh, Isabinda!

Patch. And swears she shall see neither sun nor moon till she is don Diego Babinetto's wife, who arrived last night, and is expected with impatience.

Charles. He dies; yes, by all the wrongs of love he shall: here will I plant myself, and through my breast he shall make his passage, if he enters.

Patch. A most heroic resolution! there might be ways found out more to your advantage: policy is often preferr'd to open force.

Charles. I apprehend you not.

Patch. What think you of personating this Spaniard, imposing upon the father, and marrying your mistress by his own consent?

Charles. Say'st thou so, my angel! Oh, could that be done, my life to come would be too short to recompense thee: but how can I do that when I neither know what ship he came in, nor from what part of Spain; who recommends him, or how attended.

Patch. I can solve all this. He is from Madrid, his father's name don Pedro Questo Portento Babinetto. Here's a letter of his to sir Jealous, which he dropp'd one day. You understand Spanish, and the hand may be counterfeited. You conceive me, sir?

Charles. My better genius! thou hast reviv'd my drooping soul. I'm about it instantly. Come to my lodgings, and we'll concert matters. [Exit.]

SCENE IV.

A Garden-gate open; SCENTWELL waiting within.

Enter SIR GEORGE AIRY.

Sir G. So, this is the gate, and most invitingly open. If there should be a blunderbuss here now, what a dreadful ditty would my fall make for fools, and what a jest

for the wits; how my name would be roar'd about the streets! Well, I'll venture all.

Scent. Hist, hist! air George Airy—

[Comes forward.

Sir G. A female voice! thus far I'm safe—My dear.

Scent. No, I'm not your dear, but I'll conduct you to her. Give me your hand; you must go through many a dark passage and 'dirty step before you arrive—

Sir G. I know I must before I arrive at Paradise; therefore be quick, my charming guide.

Scent. For aught you know. Come, come, your hand, and away.

Sir G. Here, here, child; you can't be half so swift as my desires.

[Exit.

SCENE V. The House.

Enter MIRANDA.

Mir. Well, let me reason a little with my mad self. Now, don't I transgress all rules to venture upon a man without the advice of the grave and wise! But then a rigid, knavish guardian who would have marry'd me—to whom? even to his nauseous self, or nobody. Sir George is what I have try'd in conversation, inquir'd into his character, and am satisfied in both. Then his love! who would have given a hundred pounds only to have seen a woman he had not infinitely lov'd? So I find my liking him has furnish'd me with arguments enough of his side: and now the only doubt remains whether he will come or no.

Enter SCENTWELL and SIR GEORGE AIRY.

Scent. That's resolv'd, madam, for here's the knight.

[Exit.

Sir G. And do I once more behold that lovely object whose idea fills my mind, and forms my pleasing dreams?

Mir. What, beginning again in heroics?—Sir George, don't you remember how little fruit your last prodigal oration produc'd? Not one bare, single word in answer.

Sir G. Ha! the voice of my incognita!—Why did

you take ten thousand ways to captivate a heart your eyes alone had vanquish'd?

Mir. No more of these flights. Do you think we can agree on that same terrible bugbear, matrimony, without heartily repenting on both sides?

Sir G. It has been my wish since first my longing eyes beheld you.

Mir. And your happy ears drank in the pleasing news I had thirty thousand pounds.

Sir G. Unkind! Did I not offer you, in those purchas'd minutes, to run the risk of your fortune, so you would but secure that lovely person to my arms?

Mir. Well, if you have such love and tenderness, since our wooing has been short, pray reserve it for our future days, to let the world see we are lovers after wedlock; 'twill be a novelty.

Sir G. Haste then, and let us tie the knot, and prove the envied pair——

Mir. Hold, not so fast; I have provided better than to venture on dangerous experiments headlong——My guardian, trusting to my dissembled love, has given up my fortune to my own disposal, but with this proviso, that he to-morrow morning weds me. He is now gone to Doctor's Commons for a licence.

Sir G. Ha! a licence!

Mir. But I have planted emissaries that infallibly take him down to Epsom, under a pretence that a brother usurer of his is to make him his executor, the thing on earth he covets.

Sir G. 'Tis his known character.

Mir. Now my instruments confirm him this man is dying, and he sends me word he goes this minute. It must be to-morrow ere he can be undeceiv'd: that time is ours.

Sir G. Let us improve it then, and settle on our coming years, endless happiness.

Mir. I dare not stir till I hear he's on the road——then I and my writings, the most material point, are soon remov'd.

Sir G. I have one favour to ask: if it lies in your power you would be a friend to poor Charles; though

the son of this tenacious man, he is as free from all his vices as nature and a good education can make him; and, what now I have vanity enough to hope will induce you, he is the man on earth I love.

Mir. I never was his enemy, and only put it on as it help'd my designs on his father. If his uncle's estate ought to be in his possession, which I shrewdly suspect, I may do him a singular piece of service.

Sir G. You are all goodness.

Enter SCENTWELL.

Scent. Oh, madam! my master and Mr. Marplot are just coming into the house.

Mir. Undone, undone! if he finds you here in this crisis all my plots are unravell'd.

Sir G. What shall I do? Can't I get back into the garden?

Scent. Oh no! he comes up those stairs.

Mir. Here, here, here! Can you condescend to stand behind this chimney-board, sir George?

Sir G. Any where, a , where, dear madam! without ceremony.

Scent. Come, come, sir, lie close.

[They put him behind the Chimney-board.]

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE and MARPLOT; SIR FRANCIS peeling an Orange.

Sir F. I could not go, though 'tis upon life and death, without taking leave of dear Chargy. Besides, this fellow buzz'd into my ears that thou might'st be so desperate as to shoot that wild rake which haunts the garden-gate, and that would bring us into trouble, dear——

Mir. So Marplot brought you back then?

Mar. Yes, I brought him back.

Mir. I'm oblig'd to him for that, I'm sure.

[Frowning at Marplot aside.]

Mar. By her looks she means she's not oblig'd to me. I have done some mischief now, but what I can't imagine. *[Aside.]*

Sir F. Well, Chargy, I have had three messengers to come to Epsom to my neighbour Squeezum's, who, for all his vast riches, is departing. *[Sighs.]*

Mar. Ay, see what all you usurers must come to.

Sir F. Peace, you young knave! Some forty years hence I may think on't—But, Chargy, I'll be with thee to-morrow before those pretty eyes are open; I will, I will, Chargy, I'll rouse you, i'faith—Here, Mrs. Scentwell, lift up your lady's chimney-board, that I may throw my peel in, and not litter her chamber.

Mir. Oh, my stars! what will become of us now?

[Aside.]

Scent. Oh, pray, sir, give it me; I love it above all things in nature, indeed I do.

Sir F. No, no, hussy; you have the green pip already; I'll have no apothecary's bills.

[Goes towards the Chimney.]

Mir. Hold, hold, hold, dear Gardy! I have a, a, a, a, a monkey shut up there; and if you open it before the man comes that is to tame it, 'tis so wild 'twill break all my china or get away, and that would break my heart; for I'm fond on't to distraction, next thee, dear Gardy?

[In a flattering Tone.]

Sir F. Well, well, Chargy, I won't open it; she shall have her monkey, poor rogue! Here, throw this peel out of the window.

[Exit Scentwell.]

Mar. A monkey! Dear madam, let me see it; I can tame a monkey as well as the best of them all. Oh, how I love the little miniatures of man!

Mir. Be quiet, mischief! and stand further from the chimney—You shall not see my monkey—why sure—

[Striving with him.]

Mar. For heaven's sake, dear madam! let me but peep, to see if it be as pretty as lady Fiddlefiddle's. Has it got a chain?

Mir. Not yet, but I design it one shall last its lifetime. Nay, you shall not see it.—Look, Gardy, how he teases me!

Sir F. *[Getting between him and the Chimney.]* Sirrah, sirrah, let my Chargy's monkey alone, or bamboo shall fly about your ears. What, is there no dealing with you?

Mar. Pugh, pox of the monkey! here's a rout! I wish he may rival you.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, they have put two more horses to the coach, as you order'd, and 'tis ready at the door.

Sir F. Well, I am going to be executor; better for thee, jewel. B'ye, Chargy; one buss!—I'm glad thou hast got a monkey to divert thee a little.

Mir. Thank'e, dear Gardy!—Nay, I'll see you to the coach.

Sir F. That's kind, adad.

Mir. Come along, impertinence. [To Marplot.]

Mar. *[Stepping back]* 'Egad, I will see the monkey now. *[Lifts up the Board, and discovers Sir George]* O Lord! O Lord! Thieves! thieves! murder!

Sir G. Damn ye, you unlucky dog! 'tis I. Which way shall I get out? Show me instantly, or I'll cut your throat.

Mar. Undone, undone! At that door there. But hold, hold; break that china, and I'll bring you off.

[He runs off at the Corner, and throws down some China.]

Re-enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE, MIRANDA, and SCENTWELL.

Sir F. Mercy on me! what's the matter?

Mir. O, you toad! what have you done?

Mar. No great harm; I beg of you to forgive me. Longing to see the monkey, I did but just raise up the board, and it flew over my shoulders, scratch'd all my face, broke your china, and whisked out of the window.

Sir F. Where, where is it, sirrah?

Mar. There, there, sir Francis, upon your neighbour Parmazan's pantiles.

Sir F. Was ever such an unlucky rogue! Sirrah, I forbid you my house. Call the servants to get the monkey again. Pug, pug, pug! I would stay myself to look for it, but you know my earnest business.

Scent. Oh, my lady will be best to lure it back: all them creatures love my lady extremely.

Mir. Go, go, dear Gardy! I hope I shall recover it.

Sir F. B'ye, b'ye, dearoo! Ah, mischief! how you look now! B'ye, b'ye. [Exit.]

Mir. Scentwell, see him in the coach, and bring me word.

Scent. Yes, madam. [Exit.]

Mir. So, sir, you have done your friend a signal piece of service, I suppose.

Mar. Why, look you, madam, if I have committed a fault, thank yourself; no man is more serviceable when I am let into a secret, and none more unlucky at finding it out. Who could divine your meaning; when you talk'd of a blunderbuss, who thought of a rendezvous? and when you talk'd of a monkey, who the devil dreamt of sir George?

Mir. A sign you converse but little with our sex, when you can't reconcile contradictions.

Enter SCENTWELL.

Scent. He's gone, madam, as fast as the coach and six can carry him——

Re-enter SIR GEORGE AIRY.

Sir G. Then I may appear.

Mar. Here's pug, ma'am—Dear sir George! make my peace, on soul I never took you for a monkey before.

Sir G. I dare swear thou didst not. Madam, I beg you to forgive him.

Mir. Well, sir George, if he can be secret.

Mar. 'Odsheart, madam! I'm as secret as a priest when trusted.

Sir G. Why 'tis with a priest our business is at present.

Scent. Madam, here's Mrs. ~~Thabinda~~ *Thabinda's* woman to wait on you.

Mir. Bring her up.

Enter PATCH.

How do ye, Mrs. Patch? What news from your lady?

Patch. That's for your private ear, madam. Sir George, there's a friend of yours has an urgent occasion for your assistance.

Sir G. His name.

Patch. Charles.

Mar. Ha! then there's something a-foot that I know nothing of. [Aside] I'll wait on you, sir George.

Sir G. A third person may not be proper, perhaps. As soon as I have dispatched my own affairs I am at his service. I'll send my servant to tell him I'll wait on him in half an hour.

Mir. How came you employed in this message, Mrs. Patch?

Patch. Want of business, madam; I am discharg'd by my master, but hope to serve my lady still.

Mir. How! discharg'd! you must tell me the whole story within.

Patch. With all my heart, madam.

Mar. Tell it here, Mrs. Patch.—Pish! pox! I wish I were fairly out of the house. I find marriage is the end of this secret; and now I'm half mad to know what Charles wants him for. *[Aside.]*

Sir G. Madam, I'm doubly press'd by love and friendship. This exigence admits of no delay. Shall we make Marplot of the party?

Mir. If you'll run the hazard, sir George; I believe he means well.

Mar. Nay, nay, for my part I desire to be let into nothing; I'll be gone, therefore pray don't mistrust me.

[Going.]

Sir G. So now he has a mind to be gone to Charles: but not knowing what affairs he may have upon his hands at present, I'm resolv'd he shan't stir. *[Aside]* No, Mr. Marplot, you must not leave us; we want a third person. *[Takes hold of him.]*

Mar. I never had more mind to be gone in my life.

Mir. Come along then; if we fail in the voyage, thank yourself for taking this ill-starr'd gentleman on board.

Sir G. That vessel ne'er can unsuccessful prove,
Whose freight is beauty, and whose pilot's love.

[Exeunt Sir George and Miranda.]

Mar. Tyty ti, tyty ti. *[Steals off the other Way.]*

Re-enter SIR GEORGE AIRY.

Sir G. Marplot! Marplot!

Mar. *[Entering]* Here! I was coming, sir George.

[Exeunt.]

ACT THE FIFTH.



SCENE I. A Room in SIR FRANCIS GRIPE'S House.

Enter MIRANDA, PATCH, and SCENTWELL.

Mir. Well, Patch, I have done a strange bold thing; my fate is determin'd, and expectation is no more. Now to avoid the impertinence and roguery of an old man, I have thrown myself into the extravagance of a young one; if he should despise, slight, or use me ill, there's no remedy from a husband but the grave, and that's a terrible sanctuary to one of my age and constitution.

Patch. O! fear not, madam; you'll find your account in sir George Airy; it is impossible a man of sense should use a woman ill, endued with beauty, wit, and fortune. It must be the lady's fault if she does not wear the unfashionable name of wife easy, when nothing but complaisance and good humour is requisite on either side to make them happy.

Mir. I long till I am out of this house, lest any accident should bring my guardian back. Scentwell, put

my best jewels into the little casket, slip them into thy pocket, and let us march off to sir Jealous's.

Scent. It shall be done, madam.

[*Exit.*]

Patch. Sir George will be impatient, madam. If their plot succeeds, we shall be well receiv'd; if not, he will be able to protect us. Besides, I long to know how my young lady fares.

Mir. Farewell, old Mammon, and thy detested walls! 'Twill be no more sweet sir Francis! I shall be compell'd the odious task of disassembling no longer to get my own, and coax him with the wheedling names of my precious, my dear, dear Gardy! O heavens!

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE, behind.

Sir F. Ah, my sweet Chargy! don't be frighted: [*She starts*] but thy poor Gardy has been abus'd, cheated, fool'd, betray'd; but nobody knows by whom.

Mir. Undone, past redemption!

[*Aside.*]

Sir F. What, won't you speak to me, Chargy?

Mir. I am so surpris'd with joy to see you I know not what to say.

Sir F. Poor, dear girl! But do you know that my son, or some such rogue, to rob or murder me, or both, contriv'd this journey? for upon the road I met my neighbour Squeezum well, and coming to town.

Mir. Good lack! good lack! what tricks are there in this world!

Re-enter SCENTWELL, with a diamond Necklace in her Hand, not seeing SIR FRANCIS.

Scent. Madam, be pleas'd to tie this necklace on, for I can't get into the—

[*Seeing Sir Francis.*]

Mir. The wench is a fool, I think! Could you not have carried it to be mended without putting it in the box?

Sir F. What's the matter?

Mir. Only, dearee! I bid her, I bid her—Your ill-usage has put every thing out of my head. But won't you go, Gardy, and find out these fellows, and have them punished; and, and—

Sir F. Where should I look for them, child? no, I'll sit me down contented with my safety, nor stir out of my own doors till I go with thee to a parson.

Mir. If he goes into his closet I am ruin'd. [*Aside*] Oh, bless me! In this fright I had forgot Mrs. Patch.

Patch. Ay, madam, and I stay for your speedy answer.

Mir. I must get him out of the house. Now assist me, fortune! [*Aside.*

Sir F. Mrs. Patch! I profess I did not see you: how dost thou do, Mrs. Patch? Well, don't you repent leaving my Chargy?

Patch. Yes, every body must love her—but I come now—Madam, what did I come for? my invention is at the last ebb. [*Aside to Miranda.*

Sir F. Nay, never whisper, tell me.

Mir. She came, dear Gardy! to invite me to her lady's wedding, and you shall go with me, Gardy; 'tis to be done this moment, to a Spanish merchant. Old sir Jealous keeps on his humour: the first minute he sees her, the next he marries her.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha, ha! I'd go if I thought the sight of matrimony would tempt Chargy to perform her promise. There was a smile, there was a consenting look, with those pretty twinklers, worth a million! 'Ods-precious! I am happier than the great mogul, the emperor of China, or all the potentates that are not in the wars. Speak, confirm it, make me leap out of my skin.

Mir. When one has resolved, 'tis in vain to stand shilly-shally. If ever I marry, positively this is my wedding-day.

Sir F. Oh! happy, happy man—Verily, I will beget a son the first night shall disinherit that dog Charles. I have estate enough to purchase a barony, and be the immortalizing the whole family of the Gripes.

Mir. Come then, Gardy, give me thy hand; let's to this house of Hymen.

My choice is fix'd, let good or ill betide.

Sir F. The joyful bridegroom I,

Mir. And I the happy bride.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *An Apartment in the House of Sir JEALOUS TRAFFICK.*

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, meeting a Servant.

Serv. Sir, here's a couple of gentlemen inquire for you; one of them calls himself signior Diego Babinetto.

Sir J. Ha! Signior Babinetto! admit 'em instantly—joyful minute; I'll have my daughter married to-night.

Enter CHARLES in a Spanish habit, with SIR GEORGE AIRY, dressed like a Merchant.

Senhor, beso las manos : vuestra merced es muy bien venido en esta tierra.

Charles. Senhor, soy muy humilde, y muy obligado cryado de vuestra merced : mi padre embia a vuestra merced, los mas profundos de sus respetos ; y a comissionado este mercad del Ingles, de concluir un negocio, que me haze el mas dichoss hombre del mundo, haziendo me su yerno.

Sir J. I am glad on't, for I find I have lost much of my Spanish. Sir, I am your most humble servant. Signior don Diego Babinetto has informed me that you are commissioned by signior don Pedro, &c. his worthy father——

Sir G. To see an affair of marriage consummated between a daughter of yours and signior Diego Babinetto his son here. True, sir, such a trust is repos'd in me, as that letter will inform you.—I hope 'twill pass upon him.

[*Aside.* Gives him a Letter.

Sir J. Ay, 'tis his hand.

[*Seems to read.*

Sir G. Good, you have countèrfeited to a nicety, Charles.

[*Aside to Charles.*

Sir J. Sir, I find by this that you are a man of honour and probity ; I think, sir, he calls you Meanwell.

Sir G. Meanwell is my name, sir.

Sir J. A very good name, and very significant. For to mean well is to be honest, and to be honest is the virtue of a friend, and a friend is the delight and support of human society.

Sir G. You shall find that I'll discharge the part of a

friend in what I have undertaken, sir Jealous. Therefore, sir, I must entreat the presence of your fair daughter, and the assistance of your chaplain; for signior don Pedro strictly enjoined me to see the marriage rites performed as soon as we should arrive, to avoid the accidental overtures of Venus.

Sir J. Overtures of Venus!

Sir G. Ay, sir; that is, those little hawking females that traverse the park and the playhouse to put off their damag'd ware—they fasten upon foreigners like leeches, and watch their arrival as carefully as the Kentish men do a shipwreck: I warrant you they have heard of him already.

Sir J. Nay, I know this town swarms with them.

Sir G. Ay, and then you know the Spaniards are naturally amorous, but very constant; the first face fixes 'em; and it may be very dangerous to let him ramble ere he is tied.

Sir J. Pat to my purpose—Well, sir, there is but one thing more, and they shall be married instantly.

Charles. Pray heaven that one thing more don't spoil all. [*Aside.*

Sir J. Don Pedro wrote me word, in his last hut one, that he designed the sum of five thousand crowns by way of jointure for my daughter, and that it should be paid into my hand upon the day of marriage—

Charles. Oh, the devil! [*Aside.*

Sir J. In order to lodge it in some of our funds in case she should become a widow, and return to England—

Sir G. Pox on't! this is an unlucky turn. What shall I say? [*Aside.*

Sir J. And he does not mention one word of it in this letter.

Sir G. Humph! True, sir Jealous, he told me such a thing, but, but, but, but—he, he, he, he—he did not imagine that you would insist upon the very day; for, for, for, for money, you know, is dangerous returning by sea, an, an, an—

Charles. Zounds! say we have brought it in commodities. [*Aside to Sir George.*

Sir G. And so, sir, he has sent it in merchandize, tobacco, sugars, spices, lemons, and so forth, which shall be turned into money with all expedition: in the mean time, sir, if you please to accept of my bond for performance——

Sir J. It is enough, sir; I am so pleas'd with the countenance of signior Diego, and the harmony of your name, that I'll take your word, and will fetch my daughter this moment. Within there.

Enter Servant.

Desire Mr. Tackum, my neighbour's chaplain, to walk hither.

Serv. Yes, sir.

Sir J. Gentlemen, I'll return in an instant.

[*Exit.*
[*Exit.*

Sir G. 'Egad, that five thousand crowns had like to have ruined the plot.

Charles. But that's over; and if fortune throws no more rubs in our way——

Sir G. Thou'lt carry the prize——But hist! here he comes.

Re-enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, dragging in ISABINDA.

Sir J. Come along, you stubborn baggage, you! come along.

Isa. Oh! hear me, sir, hear me but speak one word; Do not destroy my everlasting peace; My soul abhors this Spaniard you have chose.

Sir J. How's that?

Isa. Let this posture move your tender nature.

[*Kneels.*

For ever will I hang upon these knees,
Nor loose my hands till you cut off my hold,
If you refuse to hear me, sir.

Sir J. Did you ever see such a perverse slut? Off, I say. Mr. Meanwell, pray help me a little.

Sir G. Rise, madam, and do not disoblige your father, who has provided a husband worthy of you, one that will love you equal with his soul, and one that you will love, when once you know him.

Isa. Oh! never, never!

Could I suspect that falsehood in my heart,
I would this moment tear it from my breast,
And straight present him with the treach'rous part.

Sir J. Falsehood! why, who the devil are you in love with? Don't provoke me, for by St. Iago I shall beat you, housewife.

Sir G. Sir Jealous, you are too passionate. Give me leave, I'll try by gentle words to work her to your purpose.

Sir J. I pray do, Mr. Meanwell, I pray do; she'll break my heart. [*Weeps*] There is in that casket jewels of the value of three thousand pounds, which were her mother's, and a paper wherein I have settled one-half of my estate upon her now, and the whole when I die, but provided she marries this gentleman, else by St. Iago, I'll turn her out of doors to beg or starve. Tell her this, Mr. Meanwell, pray do. [*Walks toward Charles.*]

Sir G. Ha! this is beyond expectation—Trust to me, sir, I'll lay the dangerous consequence of disobeying you at this juncture before her, I warrant you. Come, madam, do not blindly cast your life away just in the moment you would wish to save it.

Isa. Pray cease your trouble, sir: I have no wish but sudden death to free me from this hated Spaniard. If you are his friend, inform him what I say.

Sir G. Suppose this Spaniard, which you strive to shun, should be the very man to whom you'd fly?

Isa. Ha!

Sir G. Would you not blame your rash resolve, and curse your eyes that would not look on Charles?

Isa. On Charles! Where is he? [*Rises.*]

Sir G. Hold, hold, hold. 'Sdeath! madam, you'll ruin all. Your father believes him to be signior Babinetto. Compose yourself a little, pray madam. [*He runs to Sir Jealous*] She begins to hear reason, sir; the fear of being turned out of doors has done it. Speak gently to her, sir; I'm sure she'll yield; I see it in her face.

Sir J. Well, Isabinda, can you refuse to bless a father whose only care is to make you happy.

Isa. Oh, sir! do with me what you please; I am all obedience.

Sir J. And wilt thou love him?

Isa. I will endeavour it, sir.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, here is Mr. Tackum.

Sir J. Show him into the parlour. [*Exit Servant*]—
*Senhor tome vind sueipora; cette momento les junta
 les manos.* [*Gives her to Charles.*

Charles. *Senhor, yo la recibo como se deve un tesora
 tan grande.* [*Embraces her.*

Sir J. Now, Mr. Meanwell, let's to the parson,
 Who, by his art, will join this pair for life,
 Make me the happiest father, her the happiest wife.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The Street before SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK'S House.

Enter MARPLOT.

Mar. I have hunted all over the town for Charles, but can't find him, and by Whisper's scouting at the end of the street, I suspect he must be in the house again. I am informed too that he has borrowed a Spanish habit out of the playhouse: what can it mean?

*Enter a Servant of SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK'S to him
 out of the House.*

Hark'e, sir, do you belong to this house?

Serv. Yes, sir.

Mar. Isn't your name Richard?

Serv. No, sir; Thomas.

Mar. Oh, ay, Thomas—Well, Thomas, there's a shilling for you.

Serv. Thank you, sir.

Mar. Pray, Thomas, can you tell if there be a gentleman in it in a Spanish habit?

Serv. There's a Spanish gentleman within that is just a-going to marry my young lady, sir.

Mar. Are you sure he is a Spanish gentleman?

Serv. I'm sure he speaks no English that I hear of.

Mar. Then that can't be him I want, for 'tis an English gentleman that I inquire after; he may be dressed like a Spaniard, for aught I know.

Serv. Ha! who knows but this may be an impostor? I'll inform my master, for if he should be impos'd upon, he'll beat us all round. *[Aside]* Pray come in, sir, and see if this be the person you inquire for.

Mar. Ay, I'll follow you—Now for it. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE IV. *The Inside of the House.*

Enter MARPLOT and Servant.

Serv. Sir, please to stay here; I'll send my master to you. *[Exit.]*

Mar. So, this was a good contrivance. If this be Charles now, he will wonder how I found him out.

Re-enter Servant and SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK.

Sir J. What is your earnest business, blockhead! that you must speak with me before the ceremony's past? Ha! who's this?

Serv. Why this gentleman, sir, wants another gentleman in a Spanish habit, he says.

Sir J. In a Spanish habit! 'tis some friend of signior don Diego's, I warrant. Sir, your servant.

Mar. Your servant, sir.

Sir J. I suppose you would speak with signior Babinetto.

Mar. Sir!

Sir J. I say, I suppose you would speak with signior Babinetto?

Mar. Hey-day! what the devil does he say now? *[Aside]* Sir, I don't understand you.

Sir J. Don't you understand Spanish, sir?

Mar. Not I indeed, sir.

Sir J. I thought you had known signior Babinetto.

Mar. Not I, upon my word, sir.

Sir J. What then, you'd speak with his friend, the English merchant, Mr. Meanwell?

Mar. Neither, sir, not I; I don't mean any such thing.

Sir J. Why, who are you then, sir? and what do you want? *[In an angry Tone.]*

Mar. Nay, nothing at all, not I, sir.—Pox on him! I wish I were out; he begins to exalt his voice; I shall be beaten again. *[Aside.]*

Sir J. Nothing at all, sir! Why then what business have you in my house, ha?

Serv. You said you wanted a gentleman in a Spanish habit.

Mar. Why ay, but his name is neither Babinetto nor Meanwell.

Sir J. What is his name then, sirrah? Ha! now I look at you again, I believe you are the rogue that threatened me with half a dozen myrmidons—

Mar. Me, sir! I never saw your face in all my life before.

Sir J. Speak, sir; who is it you look for? or, or—

Mar. A terrible old dog! *[Aside]* Why, sir, only an honest young fellow of my acquaintance—I thought that here might be a ball, and that he might have been here in a masquerade.—'Tis Charles, sir Francis Gripe's son, —because I knew he us'd to come hither sometimes.

Sir J. Did he so?—Not that I know of, I'm sure. Pray heaven that this be don Diego—If I should be trick'd now—Ha! my heart misgives me plaguily—Within there! stop the marriage—Run, sirrah, call all my servants! I'll be satisfied that this is signior Pedro's son ere he has my daughter.

Mar. Ha! sir George! what have I done now?

Enter SIR GEORGE AIRY, with a drawn Sword, between the Scenes.

Sir G. Ha! Marplot here—oh, the unlucky dog—What's the matter, sir Jealous?

Sir J. Nay, I don't know the matter, Mr. Meanwell.

Mar. Upon my soul, sir George—

[Going up to Sir George.]

Sir J. Nay thou, I'm betray'd, ruin'd, undone.—

Thieves, traitors, rogues! [*Offers to go in*] Stop the marriage, I say——

Sir G. I say go on, Mr. Tackum.—Nay, no entering here; I guard this passage, old gentleman: the act and deed were both your own, and I'll see 'em sign'd, or die for't.

Enter Servant.

Sir J. A pox on the act and deed!—Fall on, knock him down.

Sir G. Ay, come on, scoundrels! I'll prick your jackets for you.

Sir J. Zounds! sirrah, I'll be reveng'd on you. [*Beats Marplot.*]

Sir G. Ay, there your vengeance is due. Ha, ha!

Mar. Why, what do you beat me for? I han't married your daughter.

Sir J. Rascals! why don't you knock him down?

Serv. We are afraid of his sword, sir; if you'll take that from him, we'll knock him down presently.

Enter CHARLES and ISABINDA.

Sir J. Seize her then.

Charles. Rascals, retire; she's my wife; touch her if you dare; I'll make dogs'-meat of you.

Mar. Ay, I'll make dogs'-meat of you, rascals.

Sir J. Ah! downright English—Oh, oh, oh, oh!

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE and MIRANDA.

Sir F. Into the house of joy we enter without knocking—Ha! I think 'tis the house of sorrow, sir Jealous.

Sir J. Oh, sir Francis, are you come? What! was this your contrivance, to abuse, trick, and chouse me out of my child?

Sir F. My contrivance! what do you mean?

Sir J. No, you don't know your son there in a Spanish habit?

Sir F. How! my son in a Spanish habit! Sirrah, you'll come to be hang'd. Get out of my sight, ye dog! get out of my sight.

Sir J. Get out of your sight, sir! get out with your bags. Let's see what you'll give him now to maintain my daughter on.

Sir F. Give him! he shall never be the better for a penny of mine—and you might have look'd after your daughter better, sir Jealous. Trick'd, quotha! 'Egad, I think you design'd to trick me: but lookye, gentlemen, I believe I shall trick you both. This lady is my wife, do you see, and my estate shall descend only to her children.

Sir G. I shall be extremely obliged to you, sir Francis.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha, ha! poor sir George! does not your hundred pounds stick in your stomach? ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. No, faith, sir Francis, this lady has given me a cordial for that.

[*Takes her by the Hand.*]

Sir F. Hold, sir, you have nothing to say to this lady.

Sir G. Nor you nothing to do with my wife, sir.

Sir F. Wife, sir!

Mir. Ay, really, guardian, 'tis even so. I hope you'll forgive my first offence.

Sir F. What, have you chous'd me out of my consent and your writings then, mistress, ha?

Mir. Out of nothing but my own, guardian.

Sir J. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis some comfort at least to see you are over-reach'd as well as myself. Will you settle your estate upon your son now?

Sir F. He shall starve first.

Mir. That I have taken care to prevent. There, sir, are the writings of your uncle's estate, which have been your due these three years.

[*Gives Charles Papers.*]

Charles. I shall study to deserve this favour.

Mar. Now how the devil could she get those writings, and I know nothing of it?

Sir F. What, have you robb'd me too, mistress? 'Egad, I'll make you restore 'em—hussy, I will so.

Sir J. Take care I don't make you pay the arrears, sir. 'Tis well 'tis no worse, since 'tis no better. Come, young man, seeing thou hast outwitted me, take her, and bless you both!

Charles. I hope, sir, you'll bestow your blessing too;
'tis all I ask. [Kneels.

Mar. Do, Gardy, do.

Sir F. Confound you all!

[Exit.

Mar. Mercy upon us, how he looks!

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! ne'er mind his curses, Charles;
thou'lt thrive not one jot the worse for 'em. Since this
gentleman is reconcil'd we are all made happy.

Sir J. I always lov'd precaution, and took care to
avoid dangers; but when a thing was past, I ever had
philosophy to be easy.

Charles. Which is the true sign of a great soul. I
lov'd your daughter, and she me, and you shall have no
reason to repent her choice.

Isa. You will not blame me, sir, for loving my own
country best.

Mar. So here's every body happy; I find, but poor
Pilgarlick. I wonder what satisfaction I shall have for
being cuff'd, kick'd, and beaten in your service!

Sir J. I have been a little too familiar with you as
things are fallen out; but since there's no help for't,
you must forgive me.

Mar. 'Egad, I think so—but provided that you be
not so familiar for the future.

Sir G. Thou hast been an unlucky rogue.

Mar. But very honest.

Charles. That I'll vouch for, and freely forgive thee.

Sir G. And I'll do you one piece of service more.
Marplot; I'll take care that sir Francis makes you mas-
ter of your estate.

Mar. That will make me as happy as any of you.

Sir J. Now let us in, and refresh ourselves with a
cheerful glass, in which we'll bury all animosities; and
By my example let all parents move,
And never strive to cross their children's love;
But still submit that care to Providence above.

[Exeunt.

EPILOGUE.

In me you see one busy body more,
Though you may have enough of one before.
With epilogues, the busy body's way,
We strive to help, but sometimes mar a play.
At this mad sessions, half-condemn'd ere try'd,
Some in three days have been turn'd off, and dy'd :
In spite of parties, their attempts are vain,
For, like false prophets, they ne'er rise again.
Too late, when cast, your favour one beseeches,
And epilogues prove execution speeches.
Yet sure I spy no busy bodies here,
And one may pass, since they do ev'ry where.
Sour critics, time, and breath, and censures waste,
And balk your pleasure to refine your taste ;
One busy don ill-tim'd high tenets preaches,
Another yearly shows himself in speeches ;
Some sniv'ling cits would have a peace for spite,
To starve those warriors who so bravely fight ;
Still of a foe upon his knees afraid, [bread.
Whose well-bang'd troops want money, heart, and
Old beaux, who none, not e'en themselves, can please,
Are busy still for nothing—but to tease ;
The young, so busy to engage a heart,
The mischief done are busy most to part ;
Ungrateful wretches ! who still cross one's will,
When they more kindly might be busy still :
One to a husband who ne'er dream'd of horns,
Shows how dear spouse with friend his brows adorns ;
Th' officious tell-tale fool (he should repent it)
Parts three kind souls that liv'd at peace contented :
Some with law quirks set houses by the ears ;
With physic one what he would heal impairs ;
Like that dark, mop'd up fry, that neighb'ring curse,
Who to remove love's pains bestow a worse.
Since then this meddling tribe infest the age,
Bear one awhile expos'd upon the stage ;
Let none but busy bodies vent their spite,
And, with good-humour, pleasure crown the night.

A

Bold Stroke for a Wife.

A COMEDY.

BY MRS. CENTLIVRE.

CORRECTLY GIVEN, FROM COPIES USED IN THE THEATRES,

BY

THOMAS DIBDIN,

Author of several Dramatic Pieces: and

PROMPTER OF THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.



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1815.



PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MRS. THURMOND.

To-NIGHT we come upon a bold design,
To try to please without one borrow'd line;
Our plot is new and regularly clear,
And not one single tittle from *Motiere*;
O'er buried poets we with caution tread,
And parish sextons leave to rob the dead.
For you, bright *British* fair, in hopes to charm ye,
We bring to-night a lover from the army;
You know the *soldiers* have the strangest arts,
Such a *proportion* of prevailing parts,
You'd think that they rid post to women's hearts. }
I wonder whence they draw their bold pretence;
We do not choose them sure for our defence:
That plea is both impolitic and wrong,
And only suit such dames as want a tongue.
Is it their eloquence and fine address?
The softness of their language?—Nothing less.
Is it their courage, that they bravely dare
'To storm their sex at once?—'Egad, 'tis there:
They act by us as in the rough campaign,
Unmindful of repulses, *charge* again:
They *mine* and *countermine*, resolv'd to win,
And, if a *breach* is made—they will come in.
You'll think, by what we have of *soldiers* said,
Our female wit was in the service bred:
But she is to the hardy toil a stranger;
She loves the cloth indeed, but hates the danger:
Yet to this circle of the brave and gay, }
She bid one for her good intentions say,
She hopes you'll not reduce her to half-pay.
As for our play, 'tis *English* humour all:
Then will you let our manufacture fall?
Would you the honour of our nation raise,
Keep *English* credit up, and *English* plays.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Covent Garden, 1774. Drury Lane, 1814.

<i>Colonel Feignwell</i> . .	Mr. Woodward.	Mr. Bannister.
<i>Sir Philip Modelove</i>	Mr. Booth.	Mr. Penley.
<i>Periwinkle</i>	Mr. Quick.	Mr. Munden.
<i>Tradelove</i>	Mr. Dunstall.	Mr. Penson.
<i>Obadiah Prim</i> . . .	Mr. Shuter.	Mr. Downton.
<i>Freeman</i>	Mr. Whitefield.	Mr. Wallack.
<i>Simon Pure</i>	Mr. Wewitzer.	Mr. Oxberry.
<i>Sackbut</i>	Mr. Fearon.	Mr. Palmer.

<i>Anne Lovely</i>	Miss Macklin.	Mrs. Glover.
<i>Mrs. Prim</i>	Mrs. Pitt.	Mrs. Sparks.
<i>Betty</i>	Mrs. Evans.	Miss Tidswell.

Stockbrokers, Gentlemen, Travellers, Coachman, &c. &c.

ACT THE FIRST.



SCENE I. *A Tavern.*

COLONEL FEIGNWELL and **FREEMAN** are discovered over a Bottle.

Free. COME, colonel, his majesty's health.—You are as melancholy as if you were in love! I wish some of the beauties of Bath han't snapt your heart.

Col. F. Why 'faith, Freeman, there is something in't: I have seen a lady at Bath, who has kindled such a flame in me, that all the waters there can't quench.

Free. Is she not to be had, colonel?

Col. F. That's a difficult question to answer; however, I resolve to try; perhaps you may be able to serve me; you merchants know one another.—The lady told me herself she was under the charge of four persons.

Free. Odsol! 'tis miss Ann Lovely.

Col. F. The same—do you know her?

Free. Know her! ay—'Faith, colonel, your condition is more desperate than you imagine: why, she is the talk and pity of the whole town: and it is the opinion of the learned, that she must die a maid.

Col. F. Say you so? That's somewhat odd, in this charitable city.—She's a woman, I hope?

Free. For aught I know—but it had been as well for her had nature made her any other part of the creation. The man who keeps this house served her father; he is a very honest fellow, and may be of use to you: we'll send for him to take a glass with us: he'll give you her whole history, and 'tis worth your hearing.

Col. F. But may one trust him?

Free. With your life: I have obligations enough upon him, to make him do any thing; I serve him with wine.

[*Rings.*

Col. F. Nay, I know him very well myself. I once used to frequent a club that was kept here.

Enter Drawer.

Draw. Gentlemen, d'ye call?

Free. Ay, send up your master.

Draw. Yes, sir.

[*Exit.*

Col. F. Do you know any of this lady's guardians, Freeman?

Free. I know two of them very well.

Enter SACKBUT.

Free. Here comes one will give you an account of them all.—Mr. Sackbut, we sent for you to take a glass with us. 'Tis a maxim among the friends of the bottle, that as long as the master is in company, one may be sure of good wine.

Sack. Sir, you shall be sure to have as good wine as you send in.—Colonel, your most humble servant; you are welcome to town.

Col. F. I thank you, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. I am as glad to see you as I should a hundred tun of French claret, custom free.—My service to you, sir. [*Drinks*] You don't look so merry as you used to do; aren't you well, colonel?

Free. He has got a woman in his head, landlord: can you help him?

Sack. If 'tis in my power, I shan't scruple to serve my friend.

Col. F. 'Tis one requisite of your calling.

Sack. Ay, at t'other end of the town, where you officers use, women are good forceers of trade: a well-customed house, a handsome bar-keeper, with clean obliging drawers, soon get the master an estate; but our citizens seldom do any thing but cheat within the walls.—But as to the lady, colonel, point you at particulars? or have you a good Champagne stomach? Are you in full pay, or reduced, colonel?

Col. F. Reduced, reduced, landlord!

Free. To the miserable condition of a lover!

Sack. Pish! that's preferable to half-pay: a woman's resolution may break before the peace: push her home, colonel, there's no parlying with the fair sex.

Col. F. Were the lady her own mistress, I have some reasons to believe I should soon command in chief.

Free. You know miss Lovely, Mr. Sackbut?

Sack. Know her! Ay, poor Nancy: I have carried her to school many a frosty morning. Alas! if she's the woman, I pity you, colonel: her father, my old master, was the most whimsical, out-of-the-way temper'd man, I ever heard of, as you will guess by his last will and testament.—This was his only child: and I have heard him wish her dead a thousand times. He died worth thirty thousand pounds, which he left to his daughter, provided she married with the consent of her guardians; but that she might be sure never to do so, he left her in the care of four men, as opposite to each other as the four elements: each has his quarterly rule, and three months in the year she is obliged to be subject to each of their humours, and they are pretty different, I assure you.—She is just come from Bath.

Col. F. 'Twas there I saw her.

Sack. Ay, sir, the last quarter was her beau guardian's.—She appears in all public places during his reign.

Col. F. She visited a lady who boarded in the same house with me: I liked her person, and found an opportunity to tell her so. She replied, she had no objection to mine; but if I could not reconcile contradictions I must not think of her, for that she was

condemned to the caprice of four persons, who never yet agreed in any one thing, and she was obliged to please them all.

Sack. 'Tis most true, sir: I'll give you a short description of the men, and leave you to judge of the poor lady's condition. One is a kind of virtuoso, a silly half-witted fellow, but positive and surly, fond of every thing antique and foreign, and wears his clothes of the fashion of the last century, dotes upon travellers, and believes more of sir John Mandeville than he does of the Bible.

Col. F. That must be a rare odd fellow.

Sack. Another is a change-broker: a fellow that will out-lie the devil for the advantage of stock, and cheat his father that got him in a bargain: he is a great stickler for trade, and hates every man that wears a sword.

Free. He is a great admirer of the Dutch management, and swears they understand trade better than any nation under the sun.

Sack. The third is an old beau, that has May in his fancy and dress, but December in his face and his heels: he admires all new fashions, and those must be French; loves operas, balls, masquerades, and is always the most tawdry of the whole company on a birth-day.

Col. F. These are pretty opposite one to another, truly; and the fourth, what is he, landlord?

Sack. A very rigid quaker, whose quarter began this day.—I saw miss Lovely go in, not above two hours ago.—Sir Philip set her down. What think you now, colonel, is not the poor lady to be pitied?

Col. F. Ay, and rescued too, landlord.

Free. In my opinion that's impossible.

Col. F. There is nothing impossible to a lover. What would not a man attempt for a fine woman and thirty thousand pounds? Besides, my honour is at stake: I promised to deliver her, and she bid me win her and wear her.

Sack. That's fair, faith!

Free. If it depended upon knight-errantry, I should.

not doubt your setting free the damsel ; but to have avarice, impertinence, hypocrisy, and pride, at once to deal with, requires more cunning than generally attends a man of honour.

Col. F. My fancy tells me I shall come off with glory. I resolve to try, however.—Do you know all the guardians, Mr. Sackbut ?

Sack. Very well ; they all use my house.

Col. F. And will you assist me, if occasion requires ?

Sack. In every thing I can, colonel.

Free. I'll answer for him.

Col. F. First I'll attack my beau guardian : where lives he ?

Sack. Faith, somewhere about St. James's ; though to say in what street I cannot ; but any chairman will tell you where sir Philip Modelove lives.

Free. Oh ! you'll find him in the Park at eleven every day ; at least I never pass through at that hour without seeing him there—But what do you intend ?

Col. F. To address him in his own way, and find what he designs to do with the lady.

Free. And what then ?

Col. F. Nay, that I can't tell ; but I shall take my measures accordingly.

Sack. Well, 'tis a mad undertaking, in my mind ; but here's to your success, colonel. [*Drinks..*]

Col. F. 'Tis something out of the way, I confess ; but fortune may chance to smile, and I succeed.

Bold was the man who ventur'd first to sea,

But the first vent'ring lovers bolder were.

The path of love's dark and dang'rous way,

Without a landmark or one friendly star.

And he that runs the risk deserves the fair. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *An Apartment in PRIM's House.*

Enter MISS LOVELY and her maid BETTY.

Betty. Bless me, madam ! why do you fret and tease yourself so ? This is giving them the advantage, with a witness.

Miss L. Must I be condemned all my life to the preposterous humours of other people, and pointed at by every boy in town!—Oh! I could tear my flesh and curse the hour I was born.—Isn't it monstrously ridiculous that they should desire to impose their quaking dress upon me at these years? When I was a child, no matter what they made me wear; but now——

Betty. I would resolve against it, madam; I'd see 'em hanged before I'd put on the pinch'd cap again.

Miss L. Then I must never expect one moment's ease: she has rung such a peal in my ears already, that I shan't have the right use of them this month.—What can I do?

Betty. What can you not do, if you will but give your mind to it? Marry, madam.

Miss L. What! and have my fortune go to build churches and hospitals?

Betty. Why, let it go.—If the colonel loves you, as he pretends, he'll marry you without a fortune, madam; and I assure you a colonel's lady is no despicable thing.

Miss L. So you would advise me to give up my own fortune, and throw myself upon the colonel's!

Betty. I would advise you to make yourself easy, madam.

Miss L. That's not the way, I'm sure. No, no, girl, there are certain ingredients to be mingled with matrimony, without which I may as well change for the worse as the better. When the woman has fortune enough to make the man happy, if he has either honour or good manners, he'll make her easy. Love makes but a slovenly figure in a house, where poverty keeps the door.

Betty. And so you resolve to die a maid, do you, madam?

Miss L. Or have it in my power to make the man I love master of my fortune.

Betty. Then you don't like the colonel so well as I thought you did, madam, or you would not take such a resolution.

Miss L. It is because I do like him, Betty, that I do take such a resolution.

Betty. Why, do you expect, madam, the colonel can work miracles? Is it possible for him to marry you with the consent of all your guardians?

Miss L. Or he must not marry me at all; and so I told him; and he did not seem displeased with the news.—He promised to set me free; and I, on that condition, promised to make him master of that freedom.

Betty. Well! I have read of enchanted castles, ladies delivered from the chains of magio, giants killed, and monsters overcome; so that I shall be the less surprised if the colonel shall conjure you out of the power of your four guardians: if he does, I am sure he deserves your fortune.

Miss L. And shall have it, girl, if it were ten times as much—For I'll ingenuously confess to thee, that I do love the colonel above all the men I ever saw:—There's something so jantée in a soldier, a kind of je ne sais quoi air, that makes them more agreeable than all the rest of mankind.—They command regard, as who shall say, We are your defenders; we preserve your beauties from the insults of rude and unpolished foes, and ought to be preferred before those lazy indolent mortals, who, by dropping into their father's estates, set up their coaches, and think to rattle themselves into our affections.

Betty. Nay, madam, I confess that the army has engrossed all the prettiest fellows—A laced coat and a feather have irresistible charms.

Miss L. But the colonel has all the beauties of the mind as well as the body.—O all ye powers that favour happy lovers, grant that he may be mine! Thou god of love, if thou be'st aught but name, assist my Feignwell!

Point all thy darts to aid his just design.

And make his plots as prevalent as thine. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.



SCENE I. *The Park.*

SIR PHILIP MODELOVE *discovered upon a Bench, with a Woman masked.*

Sir P. Well but, my dear, are you really constant to your keeper?

Wom. Yes, really, sir.—Hey-day! who comes yonder? He cuts a mighty figure.

Sir P. Ha! a stranger, by his equipage keeping so close at his heels.—He has the appearance of a man of quality.—Positively French, by his dancing air.

Wom. He crosses, as if he meant to sit down here.

Sir P. He has a mind to make love to thee, child.

Enter COLONEL.

Wom. It will be to no purpose if he does.

Sir P. Are you resolved to be cruel then?

Col. F. You must be very cruel indeed, if you can deny any thing to so fine a gentleman, madam.

[Takes out his Watch,

Wom. I never mind the outside of a man.

Col. F. And I'm afraid thou art no judge of the inside.

Sir P. I am positively of your mind, sir; for creatures of her function seldom penetrate beyond the pocket.

Wom. Coxcombs!

[*Aside, and exit.*]

Sir P. Pray what says your watch? mine is down.

[*Pulling out his Watch.*]

Col. F. I want thirty-six minutes of twelve, sir.

[*Puts up his Watch, and takes out his Snuff-box.*]

Sir P. May I presume, sir.

Col. F. Sir, you honour me. [*Presenting the Box.*]

Sir P. He speaks good English—though he must be a foreigner. [*Aside*]—This snuff is extremely good—and the box prodigious fine: the work is French, I presume, sir.

Col. F. I bought it in Paris, sir.—I do think the workmanship pretty neat.

Sir P. Neat! 'tis exquisitely fine, sir. Pray, sir, if I may take the liberty of inquiring—what country is so happy to claim the birth of the finest gentleman in the universe? France, I presume.

Col. F. Then you don't think me an Englishman?

Sir P. No, upon my soul, don't I.

Col. F. I am sorry for't.

Sir P. Impossible you should wish to be an Englishman! Pardon me, sir, this island could not produce a person of such alertness.

Col. F. As this mirror shows you, sir. [*Puts up a pocket-glass to Sir Philip's Face*] I know not how to distinguish you, sir: but your mien and address speak you right honourable.

Sir P. Thus great souls judge of others by themselves—I am only adorned with knighthood: that's all, I assure you, sir; my name is sir Philip Modelove.

Col. F. Of French extraction?

Sir P. My father was French.

Col. F. One may plainly perceive it—There is a certain gaiety peculiar to my nation (for I will own

myself a Frenchman) which distinguishes us every where.—A person of your figure would be a vast addition to a coronet.

Sir P. I must own I had the offer of a barony about five years ago, but I abhorred the fatigue which must have attended it.—I could never yet bring myself to join with either party.

Col. F. You are perfectly in the right, sir Philip—a fine person should not embark himself in the slovenly concern of politics: dress and pleasure are objects proper for the soul of a fine gentleman.

Sir P. And love——

Col. F. Oh! that's included under the article of pleasure.

Sir P. Parbleu! il est un homme d'esprit. May I crave your name, sir?

Col. F. My name is La Feignwell, sir, at your service.

Sir P. The La Feignwells are French, I know; though the name is become very numerous in Great Britain of late years—I was sure you was French the moment I laid my eyes upon you; I could not come into the supposition of your being an Englishman: this island produces few such ornaments.

Col. F. Are you married, sir Philip?

Sir P. No; nor do I believe I shall ever enter into that honourable state: I have an absolute tendre for the whole sex.

Col. F. That's more than they have for you, I dare swear. [*Aside*] I find I was very much mistaken—I imagined you had been married to that young lady whom I saw in the chariot with you this morning in Gracechurch-street.

Sir P. Who, Nancy Lovely? I am a piece of a guardian to that lady: You must know her father, I thank him, joined me with three of the most preposterous old fellows—that, upon my soul, I am in pain for the poor girl: she must certainly lead apes, ha, ha!

Col. F. That's a pity, sir Philip. If the lady would give me leave, I would endeavour to avert that curse.

Sir P. As to the lady, she'd gladly be rid of us at any rate, I believe; but here's the mischief: he who marries miss Lovely, must have the consent of us all four—or not a penny of her portion.—For my part, I shall never approve of any but a man of figure—and the rest are not only averse to cleanliness, but have each a peculiar taste to gratify.—For my part, I declare I would prefer you to all men I ever saw.

Col. F. And I her to all women—

Sir P. I assure you, Mr. Feignwell, I am for marrying her, for I hate the trouble of a guardian, especially among such wretches; but resolve never to agree to the choice of any one of them—and I fancy they'll be even with me, for they never came into any proposal of mine yet.

Col. F. I wish I had leave to try them, sir Philip.

Sir P. With all my soul, sir; I can refuse a person of your appearance nothing.

Col. F. Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you.

Sir P. But do you really like matrimony?

Col. F. I believe I could with that lady.

Sir P. The only point in which we differ.—But you are master of so many qualifications, that I can excuse one fault: for I must think it a fault in a fine gentleman; and that you are such, I'll give it under my hand.

Col. F. I wish you'd give me your consent to marry miss Lovely under your hand, sir Philip.

Sir P. I'll do't, if you'll step into St. James's Coffee-house, where we may have pen and ink—though I can't foresee what advantage my consent will be to you, without you can find a way to get the rest of the guardians.—But I'll introduce you, however. She is now at a quaker's, where I carried her this morning, when you saw us in Gracechurch-street.—I assure you she has an odd ragout of guardians, as you will find when you hear the characters, which I'll endeavour to give you as we go along.—Hey! Pierre, Jacque, Renno.—Where are you all, scoundrels?—Order the chariot to St. James's Coffee-house.

Col. F. Le Noir, La Brun, La Blanc—Morbieu, où sont ces coquins là? Allons, monsieur le Chevalier.

Sir P. Ah! Pardonnez moi, monsieur.

Col. F. Not one step upon my soul, sir Philip.

Sir P. The best bred man in Europe, positively.

[Exit.]

SCENE II. OBADIAH PRIM'S House.

Enter MISS LOVELY and MRS. PRIM.

Mrs. P. Then thou wilt not obey me: and thou dost really think those fallals become thee?

Miss L. I do, indeed.

Mrs. P. Now will I be judged by all sober people, if I don't look more like a modest woman than thou dost, Anne.

Miss L. More like a hypocrite you mean, Mrs. Prim.

Mrs. P. Ah! Anne, Anne, that wicked Philip Mode-love will undo thee:—Satan so fills thy heart with pride, during the three months of his guardianship, that thou becomest a stumbling-block to the upright.

Miss L. Pray who are they? Are the pinched cap and formal hood the emblems of sanctity? Does your virtue consist in your dress, Mrs. Prim?

Mrs. P. It doth not consist in cut hair, spotted face, and a bare neck.—Oh the wickedness of the generation! the primitive women knew not the abomination of hooped petticoats.

Miss L. No; nor the abomination of cant neither. Don't tell me, Mrs. Prim, don't.—I know you have as much pride, vanity, self-conceit, and ambition among you, couched under that formal habit and sanctified countenance, as the proudest of us all; but the world begins to see your prudery.

Mrs. P. Prudery! What! do they invent new words as well as new fashions? Ah! poor fantastic age, I pity thee.—Poor deluded Anne, which dost thou think most resembleth the saint, and which the sinner, thy dress or mine? Thy naked bosom allureth the eye of

the by-stander—encourageth the frailty of human nature—and corrupteth the soul with evil longings.

Miss L. And pray who corrupted your son Tobias with evil longings? Your maid Tabitha wore a handkerchief, and yet he made the saint a sinner.

Mrs. P. Well, well, spit thy malice. I confess satan did buffet my son Tobias, and my servant Tabitha: the evil spirit was at that time too strong, and they both became subject to its workings—not from any outward provocation—but from an inward call: he was not tainted with the rottenness of the fashions, nor did his eyes take in the drunkenness of beauty.

Miss L. No! that's plainly to be seen.

Mrs. P. Tabitha is one of the faithful: he fell not with a stranger.

Miss L. So! then you hold wenching no crime, provided it be within the pale of your own tribe.—You are an excellent casuist, truly!

Enter OBADIAH PRIM.

Obad. Not stripped of thy vanity yet, Anne! Why dost thou not make her put it off, Sarah?

Mrs. P. She will not do it.

Obad. Verily thy naked bosom troubleth my outward man: I pray thee hide it, Anne: put on an handkerchief, Anne Lovely.

Miss L. I hate handkerchiefs when 'tis not cold weather, Mr. Prim.

Mrs. P. I have seen thee wear a handkerchief, nay, and a mask to boot, in the middle of July.

Miss L. Ay, to keep the sun from scorching me.

Obad. If thou couldst not bear the sunbeams, how dost thou think man can bear thy beams? Those breasts inflame desire: let them be hid, I say.

Miss L. Let me be quiet, I say.—Must I be tormented thus for ever?—Sure no woman's condition ever equalled mine! Foppery, folly, avarice, and hypocrisy are, by turns, my constant companions—I cannot think my father meant this tyranny! No, you usurp an authority which he never intended you should take.

Obad. Hark thee, dost thou call good counsel tyranny? Do I or my wife tyrannise, when we desire thee in all love to put off thy tempting attire?

Miss L. I wish I were in my grave! Kill me rather than treat me thus.

Obad. Kill thee! ha, ha! thou thinkest thou art acting some lewd play sure:—Kill thee! Art thou prepared for death, Anne Lovely? No, no, thou wouldst rather have a husband, Anne:—Thou wantest a gilt coach, with six lazy fellows behind, to flant it in the ring of vanity, among the princes and rulers of the land—who pamper themselves with the fatness thereof; but I will take care that none shall squander away thy father's estate; thou shalt marry none such, Anne.

Miss L. Would you marry me to one of your own canting sect?

Obad. Yea, verily, no one else shall ever get my consent, I do assure thee, Anne.

Miss L. And I do assure thee, Obadiah, that I will as soon turn Papist, and die in a convent.

Mrs. P. O wickedness!

Miss L. O stupidity!

Obad. O blindness of heart!

Miss L. Thou blinder of the world, don't provoke me—lest I betray your sanctity, and leave your wife to judge of your purity?—What were the emotions of your spirit—when you squeez'd Mary by the hand last night in the pantry.—When she told you, you buss'd so filthily? Ah! you had no aversion to naked bosoms, when you begged her to show you a little, little, little bit of her delicious bosom—Don't you remember those words, Mr. Prim?

Mrs. P. What does she say, Obadiah?

Obad. She talketh unintelligibly, Sarah.—Which way did she hear this? This should not have reach'd the ears of the wicked ones:—Verily it troubleth me.

[*Aside.*

Enter Servant.

Serv. Philip Modelove, whom they call sir Philip, is

below, and such another with him: shall I send them up?

Obad. Yea.

[*Exit Servant.*]

Enter SIR PHILIP MODELOVE and COLONEL FEIGNWELL.

Sir P. How dost thou do, friend Prim? Odso! my she friend here too! What, are you documenting miss Nancy? Reading her a lecture upon the pinch'd coil, I warrant ye!

Mrs. P. I am sure thou didst never read her any lecture that was good.—My flesh so riseth at these wicked ones, that prudence adviseth me to withdraw from their sight. [*Exit.*]

Col. F. Oh, that I could find means to speak with her! How charming she appears! I wish I could get this letter into her hand. [*Aside.*]

Sir P. Well, miss, I hope thou hast got the better of them.

Miss L. The difficulties of my life are not to be surmounted, sir Philip.—I hate the impertinence of him as much as the stupidity of the other. [*Aside.*]

Obad. Verily, Philip, thou wilt spoil this maiden.

Sir P. I find we still differ in opinion; but that we may none of us spoil her, prythee, Prim, let us consent to marry her.—I have sent for our brother guardians to meet me here about this very thing.—Madam, will you give me leave to recommend a husband to you?—Here's a gentleman, whom, in my mind, you can have no objection to.

[*Presents the Colonel to her; she looks another Way.*]

Miss L. Heaven deliver me from the formal and the fantastic fool!

Col. F. A fine woman—a fine horse, and fine equipage, are the finest things in the universe: and if I am so happy to possess you, madam, I shall become the envy of mankind, as much as you outshine your whole sex.

[*As he takes her Hand to kiss it, he endeavours to put a Letter into it; she lets it drop—Prim takes it up.*]

Miss L. I have no ambition to appear conspicuously ridiculous, sir. *[Turning from him.]*

Col. F. So fail the hopes of Feignwell.

Miss L. Ha! Feignwell! 'tis he! What have I done? Prim has the letter, and it will be discover'd. *[Aside.]*

Obad. Friend, I know not thy name, so cannot call thee by it; but thou seest thy letter is unwelcome to the maiden; she will not read it.

Miss L. Nor shall you; *[Snatches the Letter]* I'll tear it in a thousand pieces, and scatter it, as I will the hopes of all those that any of you shall recommend to me.

[Tears the Letter.]

Sir P. Ha! Right woman, 'faith!

Col. F. Excellent woman! *[Aside.]*

Obad. Friend, thy garb savoureth too much of the vanity of the age for my approbation; nothing that resembleth Philip Modelove shall I love; mark that—therefore, friend Philip, bring no more of thy own apes under my roof.

Sir P. I am so entirely a stranger to the monsters of thy breed, that I shall bring none of them I am sure.

Col. F. I am likely to have a pretty task by the time I have gone through them all; but she's a city worth taking, and 'egad I'll carry on the siege: if I can but blow up the out-works, I fancy I am pretty secure of the town. *[Aside.]*

Enter Servant.

Serv. Toby Periwinkle and Thomas Tradelove demand to see thee. *[To Sir Philip.]*

Sir P. Bid them come up. *[Exit Servant.]*

Miss L. Deliver me from such an inundation of noise and nonsense. Oh, Feignwell! whatever thy contrivance be, prosper it, heaven. *[Exit.]*

Sir P. Sic transit gloria mundi!

Enter PERIWINKLE and TRADELOVE.

These are my brother guardians, Mr. Feignwell.—Pr'ythee observe the creatures.

[Aside to Colonel Feignwell.]

Trade. Well, sir Philip, I obey your summons.

Per. Pray what have you to offer for the good of miss Lovely, sir Philip?

Sir P. First I desire to know what you intend to do with that lady? Must she be sent to the Indies for a venture—or live an old maid, and then be entered amongst your curiosities, and shown for a monster, Mr. Periwinkle?

Col. F. Humph, curiosities; that must be the virtuous. [*Aside.*

Per. Why what would you do with her?

Sir P. I would recommend this gentleman to her for a husband, sir—a person whom I have pick'd out from the whole race of mankind.

Obad. I would advise thee to shuffle him again with the rest of mankind; for I like him not.

Col. F. Pray, sir, without offence to your formality, what may be your objections?

Obad. Thy person, thy manners, thy dress, thy acquaintance,—thy every thing, friend.

Sir P. You are most particularly obliging, friend. Ha, ha.

Trade. What business do you follow, pray, sir?

Col. F. Humph, by that question he must be the broker. [*Aside*] Business, sir! the business of a gentleman.

Trade. That is as much as to say, you dress fine, feed high, lie with every woman you like, and pay your surgeon's bills better than your tailor's or your butcher's.

Col. F. The court is much obliged to you, sir, for your character of a gentleman.

Trade. The court, sir! What would the court do without us citizens?

Sir P. Without your wives and daughters, you mean, Mr. Trade-love.

Per. Have you ever travelled, sir?

Col. F. That question must not be answer'd now. [*Aside*] In books I have, sir.

Per. In books! That's fine travelling indeed!—Sir Philip, when you present a person I like, he shall have my consent to marry miss Lovely; till when, your servant. [*Exit.*]

Col. F. I'll make you like me before I have done with you, or I am mistaken. [*Aside.*]

Trade. And when you can convince me that a beau is more useful to my country than a merchant, you shall have mine; till then you must excuse me. [*Exit.*]

Col. F. So much for trade—I'll fit you too. [*Aside.*]

Sir P. In my opinion this is very inhuman treatment, as to the lady, Mr. Prim.

Obad. Thy opinion and mine happen to differ as much as our occupations, friend: business requireth my presence, and folly thine; and so I must bid thee farewell. [*Exit.*]

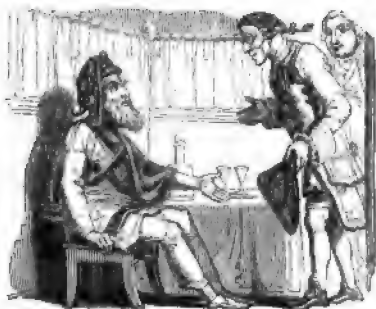
Sir P. Here's breeding for you, Mr. Feignwell!—'Gad take me.

Half my estate I'd give to see 'em bit.

Col. F. I hope to bite you all, if my plot hit.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT THE THIRD.



SCENE I. *A Tavern.*

COLONEL FEIGNWELL is discovered in an *Egyptian Dress*, with SACKBUT.

Sack. A lucky beginning, colonel—you have got the old beau's consent.

Col. F. Ay, he's a reasonable creature; but the other three will require some pains. Shall I pass upon him, think you? 'Egad, in my mind, I look as antique as if I had been preserv'd in the ark.

Sack. Pass upon him! ay, ay, if you have assurance enough.

Col. F. I have no apprehension from that quarter; assurance is the cockade of a soldier.

Sack. Ay, but the assurance of a soldier differs much from that of a traveller—Can you lie with a good grace?

Col. F. As heartily, when my mistress is the prize, as I would meet the foe when my country call'd and king commanded: so don't you fear that part: if he don't know me again, I am safe.—I hope he'll come.

Sack. I wish all my debts would come as sure: I told

him you had been a great traveller, had many valuable curiosities, and was a person of most singular taste: he seem'd transported, and begg'd me to keep you till he came.

Col. F. Ay, ay, he need not fear my running away.—Let's have a bottle of sack, landlord; our ancestors drank sack.

Sack. You shall have it.

Col. F. And whereabouts is the trap-door you mentioned?

Sack. There's the conveyance, sir. [Exit.]

Col. F. Now, if I should cheat all these roguish guardians, and carry off my mistress in triumph, it would be what the French call a grand coup d'eclat.—Odso! here comes Periwinkle.—Ah! deuce take this beard; pray Jupiter it does not give me the slip and spoil all.

Enter SACKBUT with Wine, and PERIWINKLE following.

Sack. Sir, this gentleman hearing you have been a great traveller, and a person of fine speculation, begs leave to take a glass with you: he is a man of a curious taste himself.

Col. F. The gentleman has it in his face and garb; sir, you are welcome.

Per. Sir, I honour a traveller and men of your inquiring disposition; the oddness of your habit pleases me extremely: 'tis very antique, and for that I like it.

Col. F. 'Tis very antique, sir:—this habit once belonged to the famous Claudius Ptolemaeus, who lived in the year one hundred and thirty-five.

Sack. If he keeps up to the sample, he shall lie with the devil for a bean-stack, and win it every straw.

[Aside.]
Per. A hundred and thirty-five! why, that's prodigious now!—Well, certainly 'tis the finest thing in the world to be a traveller.

Col. F. For my part I value none of the modern fashions a fig-leaf.

Per. No more don't I, sir: I had rather be the jest of a fool than his favourite—I am laughed at here for my singularity.—This coat, you must know, sir, was formerly wore by that ingenious and very learned person, Mr. John Tradescant of Lambeth.

Col. F. John Tradescant! Let me embrace you, sir—John Tradescant was my uncle, by my mother's side; and I thank you for the honour you do his memory: he was a very curious man indeed.

Per. Your uncle, sir—Nay, then 'tis no wonder that your taste is so refined; why you have it in your blood.—My humble service to you, sir; to the immortal memory of John Tradescant, your never-to-be-forgotten uncle. [Drinks.]

Col. F. Give me a glass, landlord.

Per. I find you are primitive, even in your wine: Canary was the drink of our wise forefathers; 'tis balsamic, and saves the charge of 'pothecaries cordials—Oh! that I had lived in your uncle's days! or rather, that he were now alive!—Oh! how proud he'd be of such a nephew!

Sack. Oh pox! that would have spoil'd the jest.

[Aside.]

Per. A person of your curiosity must have collected many rarities.

Col. F. I have some, sir, which are not yet come ashore; as an Egyptian idol.

Per. Pray what may that be?

Col. F. It is, sir, a kind of an ape, which they formerly worshipp'd in that country: I took it from the breast of a female mummy.

Per. Ha, ha! our women retain part of their idolatry to this day; for many an ape lies on a lady's breast, ha, ha!—

Sack. A smart old thief.

[Aside.]

Col. F. Two tusks of an hippotamus, two pair of Chinese nut-crackers, and one Egyptian mummy.

Per. Pray, sir, have you never a crocodile?

Col. F. Humph! the boatswain brought one with a design to show it, but touching at Rotterdam, and hear-

ing it was no rarity in England, he sold it to a Dutch poet.—Lookye, sir, do you see this little vial?

Per. Pray you what is it?

Col. F. This is call'd poluflosboio.

Per. Poluflosboio!—It has a rumbling sound.

Col. F. Right, sir; it proceeds from a rumbling nature—This water was part of those waves which bore Cleopatra's vessel when she sail'd to meet Anthony.

Per. Well, of all that travelled, none had a taste like you.

Col. F. But here's the wonder of the world.—This, sir, is called zona, or moros musphonon; the virtues of this are inestimable.

Per. Moros musphonon! What in the name of wisdom can that be?—to me it seems a plain belt.

Col. F. This girdle has carried me all the world over.

Per. You have carried it, you mean.

Col. F. I mean as I say, sir.—Whenever I am girded with this I am invisible; and by turning this little screw, can be in the court of the great mogul, the grand signior, and king George, in as little time as your cook can poach an egg.

Per. You must pardon me, sir, I can't believe it.

Col. F. If my landlord pleases, he shall try the experiment immediately.

Sack. I thank you kindly, sir; but I have no inclination to ride post to the devil.

Col. F. No, no, you shan't stir a foot; I'll only make you invisible.

Sack. But if you could not make me visible again.

Per. Come, try it upon me, sir; I am not afraid of the devil nor all his tricks.—'Sbud, I'll stand 'em all.

Col. F. There, sir, put it on.—Come, landlord, you and I must face the east. [*They turn about*] Is it on, sir?

Per. 'Tis on.

[*They turn about again.*]

Sack. Heaven protect me! where is he?

Per. Why here, just where I was.

Sack. Where, where, in the name of virtue? Ah, poor Mr. Periwinkle!—'Egad, look to't, you had best,

sir; and let him be seen again, or I shall have you burnt for a wizard.

Col. F. Have patience, good landlord.

Per. But really don't you see me now?

Sack. No more than I see my grandmother, that died forty years ago.

Per. Are you sure you don't lie? Methinks I stand just where I did, and see you as plain as I did before.

Sack. Ah! I wish I could see you once again.

Col. F. Take off the girdle, sir. [He takes it off.]

Sack. Ah, sir, I am glad to see you with all my heart. [Embraces him.]

Per. This is very odd; certainly there must be some trick in't.—Pray, sir, will you do me the favour to put it on yourself?

Col. F. With all my heart.

Per. But first I'll secure the door.

Col. F. You know how to turn the screw, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. Yes, yes—Come, Mr. Periwinkle, we must turn full east.

[They turn; the Colonel sinks through the Trap-door.]

Col. F. 'Tis done; now turn. [They turn.]

Per. Ha! mercy upon me; my flesh creeps upon my bones.—This must be a conjurer, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. He's the devil, I think.

Per. Oh, Mr. Sackbut, why do you name the devil, when perhaps he may be at your elbow?

Sack. At my elbow! Marry, heaven forbid!

Col. F. Are you satisfied? [From under the Stage.]

Per. Yes, sir, yes—How hollow his voice sounds!

Sack. Your's seem'd just the same—Faith, I wish this girdle were mine, I'd sell wine no more. Harkye, Mr. Periwinkle, [Takes him aside till the Colonel rises again] if he would sell this girdle, you might travel with great expedition.

Col. F. But it is not to be parted with for money.

Per. I am sorry for't, sir, because I think it the greatest curiosity I ever heard of.

Col. F. By the advice of a learned physiognomist in

Grand Cairo, who consulted the lines in my face, I returned to England, where he told me I should find a rarity in the keeping of four men, which I was born to possess for the benefit of mankind: and the first of the four that gave me his consent, I should present him with this girdle——Till I have found this jewel, I shall not part with the girdle.

Per. What can this rarity be? Didn't he name it to you?

Col. F. Yes, sir: he call'd it a chaste, beautiful, unaffected woman.

Per. Pish! women are no rarities; women are the very gewgaws of the creation; playthings for boys, who when they write man they ought to throw aside.

Sack. A fine lecture to be read to a circle of ladies!

[*Aside.*

Per. What woman is there, dress'd in all the pride and foppery of the times, can boast of such a foretop as the cockatoo?

Col. F. I must humour him. [*Aside*] Such a skin as the lizard?

Per. Such a shining breast as the humming-bird?

Col. F. Such a shape as the antelope?

Per. Or, in all the artful mixture of their various dresses, have they half the beauty of one box of butterflies?

Col. F. No; that must be allow'd—For my part, if it were not for the benefit of mankind, I'd have nothing to do with them; for they are as indifferent to me as a sparrow or a flesh-fly.

Per. Pray, sir, what benefit is the world to reap from this lady?

Col. F. Why, sir, she is to bear me a son, who shall revive the art of embalming, and the old Roman manner of burying the dead; and for the benefit of posterity, he is to discover the longitude, so long sought for in vain.

Per. Od! these are valuable things, Mr. Sackbut!

Sack. He hits it off admirably; and t'other swallows it like sack and sugar. [*Aside*] Certainly this lady must

be your ward, Mr. Periwinkle, by her being under the care of four persons.

Per. By the description it should——'Egad, if I could get that girdle, I'd ride with the sun, and make the tour of the world in four-and-twenty hours. [*Aside*] And you are to give that girdle to the first of the four guardians that shall give his consent to marry that lady, say you, sir?

Col. F. I am so order'd, when I can find him.

Per. I fancy I know the very woman—her name is Anne Lovely.

Col. F. Excellent!—He said, indeed, that the first letter of her name was L.

Per. Did he really?—Well, that's prodigiously amazing, that a person in Grand Cairo should know any thing of my ward.

Col. F. Your ward?

Per. To be plain with you, sir, I am one of those four guardians.

Col. F. Are you indeed, sir? I am transported to find that the man who is to possess this moros musphonon is a person of so curious a taste—Here is a writing drawn up by that famous Egyptian, which if you will please to sign, you must turn your face full north, and the girdle is yours.

Per. If I live till the boy is born, I'll be embalm'd, and sent to the Royal Society when I die.

Col. F. That you shall most certainly.

Enter Drawer.

Draw. Here's Mr. Staytape, the tailor, inquires for you, colonel.

Col. F. Who do you speak to, you son of a whore?

Per. Ha! colonel.

Col. F. Confound the blundering dog!

[*Aside.*

[*Aside.*

Draw. Why to colonel——

Sack. Get you out, you rascal.

[*Kicks him out, and goes after him.*

Draw. What the devil is the matter?

Col. F. This dog has ruin'd all my schemes, I see by Periwinkle's looks.

[*Aside.*

Per. How finely I should have been choused—Colonel, you'll pardon me that I did not give you your title before—it was pure ignorance, 'faith it was—Pray—hem—hem! Pray, colonel, what post had this learned Egyptian in your regiment?

Col. F. A pox of your sneer. [*Aside*] I don't understand you, sir.

Per. No, that's strange! I understand you, colonel—An Egyptian of Grand Cairo! ha, ha, ha!—I am sorry such a well-invented tale should do you no more service—We old fellows can see as far into a millstone as them that pick it—I am not to be trick'd out of my trust—mark that.

Col. F. The devil! I must carry it off; I wish I were fairly out. [*Aside*] Lookye, sir, you may make what jest you please—but the stars will be obey'd, sir; and depend upon't I shall have the lady, and you none of the girdle.—Now for Mr. Freeman's part of the plot.
[*Aside. Exit.*]

Per. The stars! ha, ha!—No star has favour'd you, it seems—The girdle! ha, ha, ha! none of your leger-demain tricks can pass upon me—Why what a pack of trumpery has this rogue picked up—His pagod, poluflosboio, his zonos, moros musphonons, and the devil knows what—But I'll take care—Ha, gone!—Ay, 'twas time to sneak off. Soho! the house!

Enter SACKBUT.

Where is this trickster? Send for a constable; I'll have this rascal before the lord mayor; I'll Grand Cairo him, with a pox to him—I believe you had an hand in putting this imposture upon me, Sackbut.

Sack. Who, I, Mr. Periwinkle? I scorn it. I perceiv'd he was a cheat, and left the room on purpose to send for a constable to apprehend him, and endeavoured to stop him when he went out—But the rogue made but one step from the stairs to the door, call'd a coach, leap'd into it, and drove away like the devil, as Mr. Freeman can witness, who is at the bar, and desires to speak with you; he is this minute come to town.

Per. Send him in. [*Exit Sackbut*] What a scheme this rogue has laid! How I should have been laugh'd at, had it succeeded!

Enter FREEMAN, booted and spurred.

Mr. Freeman, I had like to have been imposed on by the veriest rascal——

Free. I am sorry to hear it—The dog flew for't: he had not 'soap'd me, had I been aware of him; Sackbut struck at him, but miss'd his blow, or he had done his business for him.

Per. I believe you never heard of such a contrivance, Mr. Freeman, as this fellow had found out.

Free. Mr. Sackbut has told me the whole story, Mr. Periwinkle; but now I have something to tell you of much more importance to yourself.—I happen'd to lie one night at Coventry, and knowing your uncle, sir Toby Periwinkle, I paid him a visit, and, to my great surprise, found him dying.

Per. Dying!

Free. Dying, in all appearance; the servants weeping, the room in darkness; the 'pothecary, shaking his head, told me the doctors had given him over; and then there are small hopes, you know.

Per. I hope he has made his will—he always told me he would make me his heir.

Free. I have heard you say as much, and therefore resolved to give you notice. I should think it would not be amiss if you went down to-morrow morning.

Per. It is a long journey, and the roads very bad.

Free. But he has a great estate, and the land very good—Think upon that.

Per. Why that's true, as you say; I'll think upon it. In the mean time, I give you many thanks for your civility, Mr. Freeman, and should be glad of your company to dine with me.

Free. I am obliged to be at Jonathan's Coffee-house at two, and now it is half an hour after one; if I dispatch my business, I'll wait on you; I know your hour.

Per. You shall be very welcome, Mr. Freeman, and so your humble servant. [Exit.

Re-enter COLONEL FEIGNWELL and SACKBUT.

Free. Ha, ha, ha! I have done your business, colonel; he has swallow'd the bait.

Col. F. I overheard all, though I am a little in the dark. I am to personate a highwayman, I suppose—that's a project I am not fond of; for though I may fright him out of his consent, he may fright me out of my life when he discovers me, as he certainly must in the end.

Free. No, no; I have a plot for you without danger; but first we must manage Tradelove—Has the tailor brought your clothes?

Sack. Yes, pox take the thief.

Free. Well, well, no matter; I warrant we have him yet—But now you must put on the Dutch merchant.

Col. F. The deuce of this trading plot—I wish he had been an old soldier, that I might have attack'd him in my own way, heard him fight over all the battles of the late war—But for trade, by Jupiter, I shall never do it.

Sack. Never fear, colonel: Mr. Freeman will instruct you.

Free. You'll see what others do: the coffee-house will instruct you.

Col. F. I must venture however—But I have a further plot in my head upon Tradelove, which you must assist me in, Freeman; you are in credit with him, I heard you say.

Free. I am, and will scruple nothing to serve you, colonel.

Col. F. Come along then.—Now for the Dutchman—Honest Ptolemy, by your leave.

Now must bob-wig and business come in play;

A thirty thousand pound girl leads the way.

[Exit.

ACT THE FOURTH.



SCENE I.

JONATHAN'S COFFEE-HOUSE in *Change Alley*. *A Crowd of People, with Rolls of Paper and Parchment in their Hands; a Bar, Waiters, &c.*

Enter TRADELOVE and Stock-jobbers, with Rolls of Paper and Parchment.

1 Stock. South-sea at seven-eights; who buys?

Trade. Harkye, Gabriel, you'll pay the difference of that stock we transacted for t'other day?

Gab. Ay, Mr. Tradelove, here's a note for the money.

Trade. I would fain bite the spark in the brown coat: he comes very often into the alley, but never employs a broker.

Re-enter COLONEL FEIGNWELL and FREEMAN.

Trade. Mr. Freeman, your servant! Who is that gentleman?

Free. A Dutch merchant just come to England; but, harkye, Mr. Tradelove—I have a piece of news will get you as much as the French king's death did, if you

are expeditions. [*Showing him a Letter*] Read there: I received it just now from one that belongs to the emperor's minister.

Trade. [*Reads*] Sir,—As I have many obligations to you, I cannot miss any opportunity to show my gratitude: this moment my lord has receiv'd a private express, that the Spaniards have rais'd their siege from before Cagliari. If this proves of any advantage to you, it will answer both the ends and wishes of, sir, your most obliged humble servant,
HENRICUS DUSSELDORP.

P.S. In two or three hours the news will be public. May one depend upon this, Mr. Freeman?

[*Aside to Freeman.*
Free. You may—I never knew this person send me a false piece of news in my life.

Trade. Sir, I am much obliged to you: 'egad, 'tis rare news.—Who sells South-sea for next week?

Stock. [*All together*] I sell; I, I, I, I, I sell.

1 Stock. I'll sell five thousand for next week, at five-eighths.

2 Stock. I'll sell ten thousand, at five-eighths, for the same time.

Trade. Nay, nay; hold, hold; not all together, gentlemen: I'll be no bull; I'll buy no more than I can take: will you sell ten thousand pounds at a half, for any day next week, except Saturday?

1 Stock. I'll sell it you, Mr. Tradelove.

[*Freeman whispers to one of the Gentlemen.*

1 Gent. The Spaniards rais'd the siege of Cagliari! I don't believe one word of it. [*Aside.*

2 Gent. Rais'd the siege! as much as you have rais'd the Monument.

Free. 'Tis rais'd, I assure you, sir.

2 Gent. What will you lay on't?

Free. What you please.

1 Gent. Why I have a brother upon the spot, in the emperor's service: I am certain if there were any such thing, I should have had a letter.

2 Gent. I'll hold you fifty pounds 'tis false.

Free. 'Tis done.

2 Gent. I'll lay you a brace of hundreds upon the same.

Free. I'll take you.

Trade. I'll lay any man a brace of thousands the siege is rais'd.

Free. The Dutch merchant is your man to take in.

[*Aside to Tradelove.*

Trade. Does he not know the news?

Free. Not a syllable; if he did he would bet a hundred thousand pounds as soon as one penny—he's plaguy rich, and a mighty man at wagers. [To Tradelove.

Trade. Say you so?—'Egad, I'll bite him, if possible—Are you from Holland, sir?

Col. F. Ya, mynheer.

Trade. Had you the news before you came away?

Col. F. What believe you, mynheer?

Trade. What do I believe? Why I believe that the Spaniards have actually rais'd the siege of Cagliari.

Col. F. What duyvel's news is dat? 'Tis niet waer, mynheer—'tis no true, sir.

Trade. 'Tis so true, mynheer, that I'll lay you two thousand pounds on it.

Col. F. Two daysend pound, mynheer, 'tis gadaen—dis gentleman sal hold de gelt. [Gives Freeman Money.

Trade. With all my heart—this binds the wager.

Free. You have certainly lost, mynheer; the siege is rais'd indeed.

Col. F. Ik gelay't niet, mynheer Freeman, ik sal ye dubbled bonden, if you please.

Free. I am let into the secret, therefore won't win your money.

Trade. Ha, ha, ha! I have snapp'd the Dutchman, faith, ha, ha! this is no ill day's work.—Pray may I crave your name, mynheer?

Col. F. Myn naem, mynheer? myn naem is Jan Van Timtamtirelareletta Heer Van Feignwell.

Trade. Zounds, 'tis a damn'd long name; I shall never remember it—Myn Heer Van, 'Tim, Tim, 'Tim—What the devil is it?

Free. Oh! never heed: I know the gentleman, and will pass my word for twice the sum.

Trade. That's enough.

Col. F. You'll hear of me sooner than you wish, old gentleman, I fancy. [*Aside*] You'll come to Sackbut's, Freeman?

Free. Immediately.

[*Aside to Freeman.*
Aside to the Colonel.]

Trade. Mr. Freeman, I give you many thanks for your kindness——

Free. I fear you'll repent when you know all.

[*Aside.*]

Trade. Will you dine with me?

Free. I am engag'd at Sackbut's: adieu. [*Exit.*]

Trade. Sir, your humble servant. Now I'll see what I can do upon 'Change with my news. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *The Tavern.*

Enter FREEMAN and COLONEL FEIGNWELL.

Free. Ha, ha, ha! The old fellow swallowed the bait as greedily as a gudgeon.

Col. F. I have him, 'faith, ha, ha, ha! His two thousand pounds secure——If he would keep his money, he must part with the lady, ha, ha!

Enter SACKBUT.

Sack. Joy, joy, colonel! the luckiest accident in the world.

Col. F. What say'st thou?

Sack. This letter does your business.

Col. F. [*Reads*] *To Obadiah Prim, hosier, near the building call'd the Monument, in London.*

Free. A letter to Prim! How came you by it?

Sack. Looking over the letters our post-woman brought, as I always do, to see what letters are directed to my house (for she can't read, you must know), I spy'd this, directed to Prim, so paid for it among the rest. I have given the old jade a pint of wine, on purpose to delay time, till you see if the letter be of any service; then I'll seal it up again, and tell her I took it by mistake.—I have read it, and fancy you'll like the project.—Read, read, colonel.

Col. F. [Reads] Friend Prim, there is arrived from Pennsylvania one Simon Pure, a leader of the faithful, who hath sojourned with us eleven days, and hath been of great comfort to the brethren.—He intendeth for the quarterly meeting in London; I have recommended him to thy house. I pray thee treat him kindly, and let thy wife cherish him, for he's of a weakly constitution—he will depart from us the third day; which is all from thy friend in the faith, AMINIDAB HOLDFAST. Ha, ha! excellent! I understand you, landlord: I am to personate this Simon Pure, am I not?

Sack. Don't you like the hint?

Col. F. Admirably well!

Free. 'Tis the best contrivance in the world, if the right Simon gets not there before you—

Col. F. No, no, the quakers never ride post: and suppose, Freeman, you should wait at the Bristol coach, that if you see any such person, you might contrive to give me notice—

Free. I will.

[Bell rings.]

Sack. Coming, coming!

[Exit.]

Free. Thou must dispatch Periwinkle first—Remember his uncle, sir Toby Periwinkle, is an old bachelor of seventy-five—that he has seven hundred a year, most in abbey-land—that he was once in love with your mother; shrewdly suspected by some to be your father.—That you have been thirty years his steward—and ten years his gentleman—remember to improve these hints.

Col. F. Never fear; let me alone for that—but what's the steward's name?

Free. His name is Pillage.

Col. F. Enough—Now for the country put.

Enter SACKBUT.

Sack. Zounds! Mr. Freeman, yonder is Tradelove in the damned'st passion in the world.—He swears you are in the house—he says you told him you were to dine here.

Free. I did so, ha, ha, ha! he has found himself bit already.

Col. F. The devil! he must not see me in this dress now.

Sack. I told him I expected you here, but you were not come yet.

Free. Very well—make you haste out, colonel, and let me alone to deal with him: where is he?

Sack. In the King's-head.

Free. Ay, ay, very well. Landlord, let him know I am come in—and now, Mr. Pillage, success attend you. [*Exit Sackbut.*]

Col. F. Mr. Proteus rather——

From changing shape, and imitating Jove,
I draw the happy omens of my love.

I'm not the first young brother of the blade,
Who made his fortune in a masquerade. [*Exit.*]

Enter TRADELOVE.

Free. Zounds! Mr. Tradelove, we're bit it seems.

Trade. Bit, do you call it, Mr. Freeman! I'm ruin'd.

——Pox on your news.

Free. Pox on the rascal that sent it me.——

Trade. Send it you! Why Gabriel Skinflint has been at the minister's, and spoke with him; and he has assured him 'tis every syllable false; he received no such express.

Free. I know it: I this minute parted with my friend, who protested he never sent me any such letter.—Some roguish stock-jobber has done it on purpose to make me lose my money, that's certain: I wish I knew who he was; I'd make him repent it—I have lost three hundred pounds by it.

Trade. What signifies your three hundred pounds to what I have lost? There's two thousand pounds to that Dutchman with a cursed long name, besides the stock I bought: the devil! I could tear my flesh—I must never show my face upon 'Change more;—for, by my soul, I can't pay it.

Free. I am heartily sorry for it! What can I serve you in? Shall I speak to the Dutch merchant, and try to get you time for the payment?

Trade. Time! Ads'heart! I shall never be able to look up again.

Free. I am very much concerned that I was the occasion, and wish I could be an instrument of retrieving your misfortune; for my own, I value it not. Adso, a thought comes into my head, that well improv'd, may be of service.

Trade. Ah! there's no thought can be of any service to me, without paying the money or running away.

Free. How do ye know? What do you think of my proposing miss Lovely to him? He is a single man—and I heard him say he had a mind to marry an English woman—nay, more than that, he said somebody told him you had a pretty ward—he wished you had betted her instead of your money.

Trade. Ay, but he'd be hanged before he'd take her instead of the money: the Dutch are too covetous for that; besides, he did not know that there were three more of us, I suppose.

Free. So much the better; you may venture to give him your consent, if he'll forgive you the wager: It is not your business to tell him that your consent will signify nothing.

Trade. That's right, as you say; but will he do it, think you?

Free. I can't tell that; but I'll try what I can do with him.—He has promised to meet me here an hour hence; I'll feel his pulse, and let you know: If I find it feasible, I'll send for you; if not, you are at liberty to take what measures you please.

Trade. You must extol her beauty, double her portion, and tell him I have the entire disposal of her; and that she can't marry without my consent—and that I am a covetous rogue, and will never part with her without a valuable consideration.

Free. Ay, ay, let me alone for a lie at a pinch.

Trade. 'Egad, if you can bring this to bear, Mr. Free-

man, I'll make you whole again: I'll pay the three hundred pounds you lost with all my soul.

Free. Well, I'll use my best endeavours.—Where will you be?

Trade. At home: pray heaven you prosper!—If I were but the sole trustee now, I should not fear it.

Free. Ha, ha, ha!—he has it.

[*Exit.*
[*Exit.*

SCENE III. PERIWINKLE'S House.

Enter PERIWINKLE on one side, and a Footman on the other.

Foot. A gentleman from Coventry inquires for you, sir.

Per. From my uncle, I warrant you: bring him up.—This will save me the trouble, as well as the expense of a journey.

Enter COLONEL.

Col. F. Is your name Periwinkle, sir?

Per. It is, sir.

Col. F. I am sorry for the message I bring.—My old master, whom I served these forty years, claims the sorrow due from a faithful servant to an indulgent master.

[*Weeps.*

Per. By this I understand, sir, my uncle, sir Toby Periwinkle, is dead.

Col. F. He is, sir, and has left you heir to seven hundred a year, in as good abbey-land as ever paid Peterpence to Rome.—I wish you long to enjoy it, but my tears will flow when I think of my benefactor.—[*Weeps*] Ah! he was a good man—he has not left many of his fellows, the poor lament him sorely.

Per. I pray, sir, what office bore you?

Col. F. I was his steward, sir.

Per. I have heard him mention you with much respect: your name is—

Col. F. Pillage, sir.

Per. Ay, Pillage, I do remember he called you Pillage.—Pray, Mr. Pillage, when did my uncle die.

Col. F. Monday last, at four in the morning. About two he signed his will, and gave it into my hands, and strictly charg'd me to leave Coventry the moment he expired; and deliver it to you with what speed I could: I have obeyed him, sir, and there is the will.

[Gives it to *Periwinkle*.]

Per. 'Tis very well, I'll lodge it in the commons.

Col. F. There are two things which he forgot to insert, but charg'd me to tell you, that he desired you'd perform them as readily as if you had found them written in the will, which is to remove his corpse, and bury him by his father at St. Paul's, Covent-garden, and to give all his servants mourning.

Per. That will be a considerable charge; a pox of all modern fashions. [*Aside*] Well! it shall be done, Mr. Pillage, I will agree with one of death's fashion-monger's, called an undertaker, to go down, and bring up the body.

Col. F. I hope, sir, I shall have the honour to serve you in the same station I did your worthy uncle: I have not many years to stay behind him, and would gladly spend them in the family, where I was brought up.—[*Weeps*].—He was a kind and tender master to me.

Per. Pray don't grieve, Mr. Pillage, you shall hold your place, and every thing else which you held under my uncle—You make me weep to see you so concern'd. [*Weeps*] He lived to a good old age, and we are all mortal.

Col. F. We are so, sir, and therefore I must beg you to sign this lease: You'll find, sir Toby has taken particular notice of it in his will—I could not get it time enough from the lawyer, or he had signed it before he died.

[Gives him a *Paper*.]

Per. A lease! for what?

Col. F. I rented a hundred a year farm of sir Toby upon lease, which lease expires at Lady-day next. I desire to renew for twenty years—that's all, sir.

Per. Let me see. [*Looks over the Lease*] Very well—Let me see what he says in his will about it. [*Lays*

the Lease upon the Table, and looks on the Will] Ho, here it is—*The farm lying—now in possession of Samuel Pillage—suffer him to renew his lease—at the same rent.*—Very well, Mr. Pillage, I see my uncle does mention it, and I'll perform his will.—Give me the lease.—*[Colonel gives it him, he looks upon it, and lays it upon the Table]* Pray you step to the door, and call for pen and ink, Mr. Pillage.

Col. F. I have a pen and ink in my pocket, sir, *[Pulls out an Ink-horn]* I never go without that.

Per. I think it belongs to your profession.—*[He looks upon the Pen while the Colonel changes the Lease and lays down the Contract]* I doubt this is but a sorry pen, though it may serve to write my name. *[Writes.*

Col. F. Little does he think what he signs. *[Aside.*

Per. There is your lease, Mr. Pillage. *[Gives him the Paper]* Now I must desire you to make what haste you can down to Coventry, and take care of every thing, and I'll send down the undertaker for the body; do you attend it up, and whatever charge you are at, I'll repay you.

Col. F. You have paid me already, I thank you, sir. *[Aside.*

Per. Will you dine with me?

Col. F. I would rather not: there are some of my neighbours which I met as I came along, who leave the town this afternoon, they told me, and I should be glad of their company down.

Per. Well, well, I won't detain you. I will give orders about mourning. *[Exit Colonel]* Seven hundred a year! I wish he had died seventeen years ago:—What a valuable collection of rarities might I have had by this time?—I might have travelled over all the known parts of the globe, and made my own closet rival the Vatican at Rome—Odso, I have a good mind to begin my travels now—let me see—I am but sixty? My father, grandfather, and great grandfather reached ninety odd;—I have almost forty years good:—Let me consider! what will seven hundred a year amount to in—ay; in thirty years, I say—but

thirty—thirty times seven, is seven times thirty—that is—just twenty-one thousand pounds—'tis a great deal of money—I may very well reserve sixteen hundred of it for a collection of such rarities as will make my name famous to posterity—I would not die like other mortals, forgotten in a year or two, as my uncle will be—No,

With nature's curious works I'll raise my fame,
That men till doomsday may repeat my name. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV. *A Tavern.*

FREEMAN and TRADELOVE discovered over a Bottle.

Trade. Come, Mr. Freeman, here's Mynheer Jan, Van, Tim, Tam, Tam,—I shall never think of that Dutchman's name—

Free. Mynheer Jan Van Timentirelereletta Heer Van Feignwell.

Trade. Ay. Heer Van Feignwell : I never heard such a confounded name in my life—here's his health, I say.

Free. With all my heart.

Trade. Faith I never expected to have found so generous a thing in a Dutchman.

Free. As soon as I told him your circumstances, he replied, he would not be the ruin of any man for the world—and immediately made this proposal himself.—Let him take what time he will for the payment, said he ; or if he'll give me his word, I'll forgive him the debt.

Trade. Well, Mr. Freeman, I can but thank you.—'Egad you have made a man of me again ! and if ever I lay a wager more, may I rot in gaol.

Free. I assure you, Mr. Tradelove, I was very much concerned, because I was the occasion, though very innocently, I protest.

Trade. I dare swear you was, Mr. Freeman.

Enter COLONEL FEIGNWELL, dressed as a Dutch Merchant.

Col. F. Ha, mynheer Tradelove, Ik been sorry voor your troubles—maer Ik sal you easie maken, Ik will de gelt nie hebben—

Trade. I shall for ever acknowledge the obligation, sir.

Free. But you understand upon what condition, Mr. Tradelove; miss Lovely.

Col. F. Ya, de frow sal al te regt setten, mynheer.

Trade. With all my heart, mynheer; you shall have my consent to marry her freely——

Free. Well then, as I am a party concerned between you, mynheer Jan Van Timlantirelereletta Heer Van Reignwell shall give you a discharge of your wager under his own hand,——and you shall give him your consent to marry miss Lovely under yours,——that is the way to avoid all manner of disputes hereafter.

Col. F. Ya, weeragtig.

Trade: Ay, ay, so it is, Mr. Freeman: I'll give it under mine this minute. [Sits down to write.

Col. F. And so Ik sal.

[Does the same.

Free. So ho, the house!

Enter Drawer.

Bid your master come up——I'll see there be witnesses enough to the bargain. [Aside.

Enter SACKBUT.

Sack. Do you call, gentlemen?

Free. Ay, Mr. Sackbut, we shall want your hand here.——

Trade. There, mynheer, there's my consent as amply as you can desire; but you must insert your own name, for I know not how to spell it: I have left a blank for it. [Gives the Colonel a Paper.

Col. F. Ya Ik sal dat well doen——

Free. Now, Mr. Sackbut, you and I will witness it. [They write.

Col. F. Daer, mynheer Tradelove, is your discharge. [Gives him a Paper.

Trade. Be pleased to witness this receipt too, gentlemen. [Freeman and Sackbut put their Hands.

Free. Ay, ay, that we will.

Col. F. Well, mynheer, ye most meer doen, ye most myn voorsprach to de frow syn.

Free. He means you must recommend him to the lady.—

Trade. That I will, and to the rest of my brother guardians.

Col. F. Wat voor, de duyvel heb you meer guardians.

Trade. Only three, mynheer.

Col. F. What donder heb ye myn betrocken, mynheer?—Had Ik dat gewoeten, Ik soude caven met you geweest syn.

Sack. But Mr. Tradelove is the principal, and he can do a great deal with the rest, sir.

Free. And he shall use his interest, I promise you, mynheer.

Trade. I will say all that ever I can think on to recommend you, mynheer; and if you please, I'll introduce you to the lady.

Col. F. Well, dat is waer—Maer ye must first spreken of myn to de frow, and to oudere gentlemen.

Free. Ay, that's the best way—and then I and the Heer Feignwell will meet you there.

Trade. I will go this moment, upon honour.—Your most obedient humble servant.—My speaking will do you little good, mynheer: ha, ha! we have bit you, faith: ha, ha!

Well—my debts discharged, and as for Nan,

He has my consent—to get her if he can. [*Exit.*

Col. F. Ha, ha, ha! this was a masterpiece of contrivance, Freeman.

Free. He hugs himself with his supposed good fortune, and little thinks the luck's on our side!—But come, pursue the fickle goddess, while she's in the mood—Now for the quaker.

Col. F. That's the hardest task.

Of all the counterfeits perform'd by man,

A soldier makes the simplest puritan. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.



SCENE I. *An Apartment in PRIM's House.*

Enter MRS. PRIM and MISS LOVELY, in Quaker's Dresses, meeting.

Mrs. P. So, now I like thee, Anne: art thou not better without thy monstrous hoop-coat and patches?—If heaven should make thee so many black spots upon thy face, would it not fright thee, Anne?

Miss L. If it should turn you inside outward, and show all the spots of your hypocrisy, 'twould fright me worse!

Mrs. P. My hypocrisy! I scorn thy words, Anne: I lay no baits.

Miss L. If you did, you'd catch no fish.

Mrs. P. Well, well, make thy jests—but I'd have thee to know, Anne, that I could have caught as many fish (as thou call'st them) in my time, as ever thou didst with all thy fool-traps about thee.

Miss L. Is that the reason of your formality, Mrs. Prim? Truth will out: I ever thought, indeed, there was more design than godliness in the pinched cap.

Mrs. P. Go, thou art corrupted with reading lewd plays, and filthy romances—Ah! I wish thou art not already too familiar with the wicked ones.

Miss L. Too familiar with the wicked ones! Pray, no more of those freedoms, madam—I am familiar with none so wicked as yourself—How dare you thus talk to me! you, you, you, unworthy woman you.

[*Bursts into tears.*]

Enter TRADELOVE.

Trade. What in tears, Nancy? What have you done to her, Mrs. Prim, to make her weep?

Miss L. Done to me! I admire I keep my senses among you;—but I will rid myself of your tyranny, if there be either law or justice to be had:—I'll force you to give me up my liberty.

Mrs. P. Thou hast more need to weep for thy sins; Anne—Yea, for thy manifold sins.

Miss L. Don't think that I'll be still the fool which you have made me—No, I'll wear what I please—go when and where I please—and keep what company I think fit, and not what you shall direct—I will.

Trade. For my part, I do think all this very reasonable, miss Lovely—'tis fit you should have your liberty, and for that very purpose I am come.

Enter PERIWINKLE and OBADIAH PRIM, with a Letter in his Hand.

Per. I have bought some black stockings of your husband, Mrs. Prim, but he tells me the glover's trade belongs to you? therefore I pray you look me out five or six dozen of mourning gloves, such as are given at funerals, and send them to my house.

Obad. My friend Periwinkle has got a good windfall to-day—seven hundred a year.

Mrs. P. I wish thee joy of it, neighbour.

Trade. What, is sir Toby dead then?

Per. He is! You'll take care, Mrs. Prim.

Mrs. P. Yea, I will, neighbour.

Obad. This letter recommendeth a speaker; 'tis from

Aminadab Holdfast of Bristol: peradventure he will be here this night; therefore, Sarah, do thou take care for his reception—— [Gives her the Letter.

Mrs. P. I will obey thee. [Exit.

Obad. What art thou in the dumps for, Anne?

Trade. We must marry her, Mr. Prim.

Obad. Why truly, if we could find a husband worth having, I should be as glad to see her married as thou wouldst, neighbour.

Per. Well said, there are but few worth having.

Trade. I can recommend you a man now, that I think you can none of you have an objection to!

Enter SIR PHILIP MODELOVE.

Per. You reoommend? Nay, whenever she marries, I'll recommend the husband——

Sir P. What must it be a whale, or a rhinoceros, Mr. Periwinkle? ha, ha, ha!

Per. He shall be none of the fops at your end of the town, with full perukes and empty skulls,—nor yet any of our trading gentry, who puzzle the heralds to find arms for their coaches.—No, he shall be a man famous for travels, solidity, and curiosity—one who has searched into the profundity of nature! When heaven shall direct such a one, he shall have my consent, because it may turn to the benefit of mankind.

Miss L. The benefit of mankind! What would you anatomize me?

Sir P. Ay, ay, madam, he would dissect you.

Trade. Or, pore over you through a microscope, to see how your blood circulates from the crown of your head to the sole of your foot—ha, ha! but I have a husband for you, a man that knows how to improve your fortune; one that trades to the four corners of the globe.

Miss L. And would send me for a venture perhaps.

Trade. One that will dress you in all the pride of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America—a Dutch merchant, my girl.

Sir P. A Dutchman! ha, ha! there's a husband for a

fine lady.—Ya frow, will you meet myn shapen—ha, ha! he'll learn you to talk the language of the hogs, madam, ha, ha!

Trade. He'll teach you that one merchant is of more service to a nation than fifty coxcombs. 'Tis the merchant makes the belle.—How would the ladies sparkle in the box, without the merchant? The Indian diamond! The French brocade! The Italian fan! The Flanders lace! The fine Dutch holland! How would they vent their scandal over their tea-tables? And where would your beaux have Champagne to toast their mistresses, were it not for the merchant.

Obad. Verily, neighbour Tradelove, thou dost waste thy breath about nothing—All that thou hast said tendeth only to debauch youth, and fill their heads with the pride and luxury of this world.—The merchant is a very great friend to satan, and sendeth as many to his dominions as the pope.

Per. Right; I say knowledge makes the man.

Obad. Yea, but not thy kind of knowledge—it is the knowledge of truth—Search thou for the light within, and not for baubles, friend.

Miss L. Ah, study your country's good, Mr. Periwinkle, and not her insects.—Rid you of your home-bred monsters, before you fetch any from abroad.—I dare swear you have maggots enough in your own brain to stock all the virtuosos in Europe with butterflies.

Sir P. By my soul, miss Nancy's a wit.

Obad. That is more than she can say of thee, friend.—Lookye, 'tis in vain to talk, when I meet a man worthy of her, she shall have my leave to marry him.

Miss L. Provided he be of the faithful—Was there ever such a swarm of caterpillars to blast the hopes of a woman! [*Aside*] Know this, that you contend in vain: I'll have no husband of your choosing, nor shall you lord it over me long.—I'll try the power of an English senate—Orphans have been redressed and wills set aside—and none did ever deserve their pity more.—O Feignwell! where are thy promises to free me

from those vermin? Alas! the task was more difficult than be imagined!

A harder task than what the poets tell
Of yore, the fair Andromeda befell;
She but one monster fear'd, I've four to fear,
And see no Perseus, no deliv'rer near. [Exit.]

Enter Servant.

Serv. [*Whispers to Obad.*] The woman is mad.

Sir P. So are you all, in my opinion. [Exit:]

Serv. One Simon Pure inquireth for thee. [Exit.]

Obad. Friend Tradelove, business requireth my presence.

Trade. Oh, I shan't trouble you—Pox take him for an unmannerly dog—However, I have kept my word with my Dutchman, and I'll introduce him too for all you.

Enter COLONEL in a Quaker's Habit.

Obad. Friend Pure thou art welcome: how is it with friend Holdfast, and all friends in Bristol? Timothy Littleworth, John Slenderbrain, and Christopher Keep-faith?

Col. F. A goodly company! [*Aside*] They are all in health, I thank thee for them.

Obad. Friend Holdfast writes me word, that thou camest lately from Pennsylvania: how do all friends there?

Col. F. What the devil shall I say? I know just as much of Pennsylvania as I do of Bristol. [Aside.]

Obad. Do they thrive?

Col. F. Yea, friend, the blessing of their good works fall upon them.

Enter MRS. PRIM and MISS LOVELY.

Obad. Sarah, know our friend Pure.

Mrs. P. Thou art weloome. [He salutes her.]

Col. F. Here comes the sum of all my wishes.—How charming she appears even in that disguise! [Aside.]

Obad. Why dost thou consider the maiden so attentively, friend.

Col. F. I will tell thee: About four days ago I saw a vision—This very maiden, but in vain attire, standing

on a precipice, and heard a voice which called me by my name—and bid me put forth my hand and save her from the pit.—I did so, and methought the damsel grew unto my side.

Mrs. P. What can that portend?

Obad. The damsel's conversion—I am persuaded.

Miss L. That's false, I'm sure— *[Aside.*

Obad. Wilt thou use the means, friend Pure?

Col. F. Means! What means? Is she not thy daughter, already one of the faithful?

Mrs. P. No, alas! she's one of the ungodly.

Obad. Pray thee mind what this good man will say unto thee: he will teach thee the way thou shouldst walk, Anne.

Miss L. I know my way without his instruction: I hop'd to have been quiet when once I had put on your odious formality here.

Col. F. Then thou wearest it out of compulsion, not choice, friend?

Miss L. Thou art in the right of it, friend—

Mrs. P. Art thou not ashamed to mimic the good man? Ah! thou stubborn girl.

Col. F. Mind her not; she hurteth not me—If thou wilt leave her alone with me, I will discuss some few points with her, that may perchance soften her stubbornness, and melt her into compliance.

Obad. Content: I pray thee put it home to her.—Come, Sarah, let us leave the good man with her.

Miss L. *[Catching hold of Prim; he breaks loose; exeunt Obad. and Mrs. P.]* What, do you mean to leave me with this old enthusiastical canter? Don't think because I complied with your formality, to impose your ridiculous doctrine upon me.

Col. F. I pray thee, young woman, moderate thy passion.

Miss L. I pray thee walk after thy leader, you will but lose your labour upon me.—These wretches will certainly make me mad!

Col. F. I am of another opinion! the spirit telleth me I shall convert thee, Anne.

Miss L. 'Tis a lying spirit, don't believe it.

Col. F. Say'st thou so? Why then thou shalt convert me, my angel. [*Catching her in his Arms.*]

Miss L. [*Shrieks*] Ah! monster, hold off, or I'll tear thy eyes out.

Col. F. Hush! for heaven's sake—dost thou not know me? I am Feignwell.

Miss L. Feignwell!

Re-enter OBADIAH PRIM.

Oh, I'm undone! Prim here—I wish with all my soul I had been dumb.

Obad. What is the matter? Why didst thou shriek out, Anne?

Miss L. Shriek out! I'll shriek and shriek again, cry murder, thieves, or any thing, to drown the noise of that eternal babbler, if you leave me with him any longer.

Obad. Was that all? Fie, fie, Anne.

Col. F. No matter, I'll bring down her stomach, I'll warrant thee—Leave us, I pray thee?

Obad. Fare thee well. Verily, I was afraid the flesh had got the better of the spirit. [*Exit.*]

Col. F. My charming lovely woman! [*Embraces her.*]

Miss L. What meanest thou by this disguise, Feignwell?

Col. F. To set thee free, if thou wilt perform thy promise.

Miss L. Make me mistress of my fortune, and make thy own conditions.

Col. F. This night shall answer all my wishes.—See here I have the consent of three of thy guardians already, and doubt not but Prim will make the fourth.

[*Obadiah listening.*]

Obad. I would gladly hear what arguments the good man useth to bend her. [*Aside.*]

Miss L. Thy words give me new life, methinks.

Obad. What do I hear?

Miss L. Thou best of men, heaven meant to bless me sure, when I first saw thee.

Obad. He hath mollified her—O wonderful conversion!

Col. F. [*Softly*] Ha! Prim listening.—No more, my love, we are observed: seem to be edified, and give 'em

hopes that thou wilt turn quaker, and leave the rest to me. [*Aloud*] I am glad to find that thou art touched with what I said unto thee, Anne; another time I will explain the other article unto thee: in the mean while be thou dutiful to our friend Prim.

Miss L. I shall obey thee in every thing.

[*Obadiah comes forward.*]

Obad. Oh, what a prodigious change is here! Thou has wrought a miracle, friend! Anne, how dost thou like the doctrine he hath preached?

Miss L. So well, that I could talk to him for ever, methinks—I am ashamed of my former folly, and ask your pardon.

Col. F. Enough, enough, that thou art sorry: he is no pope, Anne.

Obad. True, I am no pope, Anne. Verily, thou dost rejoice me exceedingly, friend: will it please thee to walk into the next room, and refresh thyself?—Come, take the maiden by the hand.

Col. F. We will follow thee.

Enter Servant.

Serv. There is another Simon Pure, inquireth for thee, master.

Col. F. The devil there is.

[*Aside.*]

Obad. Another Simon Pure! I do not know him, is he any relation of thine?

Col. F. No, friend, I know him not.—Pox take him: I wish he were in Pennsylvania again, with all my soul.

[*Aside.*]

Miss L. What shall I do?

Obad. Bring him up.

Col. F. Humph! then one of us must go down, that's certain—Now impudence assist me.

Enter SIMON PURE.

Obad. What is thy will with me, friend?

Simon. Didst thou not receive a letter from Aminadab Holdfast of Bristol, concerning one Simon Pure?

Obad. Yea, and Simon Pure is already here, friend.

Col. F. And Simon Pure will stay here, friend, if it be possible.

[*Aside.*]

Simon. That's an untruth, for I am he.

Col. F. Take thou heed, friend, what thou dost say: I do affirm that I am Simon Pure.

Simon. Thy name may be Pure, friend, but not that Pure.

Col. F. Yea, that Pure which my good friend, Amnadab Holdfast, wrote to my friend Prim about: the same Simon Pure that came from Pennsylvania, and sojourned in Bristol eleven days: thou wouldst not take my name from me, wouldst thou?—till I have done with it. *[Aside.]*

Simon. Thy name! I am astonished!

Col. F. At what? at thy own assurance?

[Going up to him, Simon Pure starts back.]

Simon. Avaunt, satan, approach me not: I defy thee, and all thy works.

Miss L. Oh, he'll out-cant him.—Undone, undone for ever. *[Aside.]*

Col. F. Hark thee, friend, thy sham will not take—Don't exert thy voice, thou art too well acquainted with satan to start at him, thou wicked reprobate—What can thy design be here?

Enter a Servant, who gives PRIM a Letter.

Obad. One of these must be a counterfeit, but which I cannot say.

Col. F. What can that letter be? *[Aside.]*

Simon. Thou must be the devil, friend, that's certain; for no human power can speak so great a falsehood.

Obad. This letter sayeth that thou art better acquainted with that prince of darkness, than any here—Read that, I pray thee, Simon. *[Gives it to the Colonel.]*

Col. F. 'Tis Freeman's hand.—*[Reads]* There is a design formed to rob your house this night, and cut your throat; and for that purpose there is a man disguised like a quaker, who is to pass for one Simon Pure: the gang, whereof I am one, though now resolved to rob no more, has been at Bristol: one of them came in the coach with the quaker, whose name he hath taken; and from what he hath gathered from him, formed that design, and did not doubt but he should impose so far

upon you as to make you turn out the real Simon Pure, and keep him with you. Make the right use of this. Adieu.—Excellent well!

Obad. Dost thou hear this? [To Simon Pure. *Aside.*

Simon. Yea, but it moveth me not; that doubtless is the impostor. [Pointing at the Colonel.

Col. F. Ah! thou wicked one—now I consider thy face, I remember thou didst come up in the leathern conveniency with me—thou hadst a black bob-wig on, and a brown camblet coat with brass buttons—Canst thou deny it, ha?

Simon. Yes, I can, and with a safe conscience too, friend.

Obad. Verily, friend, thou art the most impudent villain I ever saw.

Miss L. Nay, then, I'll have a fling at him. [*Aside*] I remember the face of this fellow at Bath—Ay, this is he that pick'd my lady Raffle's pocket in the grove—Don't you remember that the mob pump'd you, friend?—This is the most notorious rogue—

Simon. What does provoke thee to seek my life? Thou wilt not hang me, wilt thou, wrongfully?

Obad. She will do thee no hurt, nor thou shalt do me none; therefore get thee about thy business, friend, and leave thy wicked course of life, or thou mayst not come off so favourably every where. Simon, I pray thee, put him forth.

Col. F. Go, friend, I would advise thee, and tempt thy fate no more.

Simon. Yes, I will go; but it shall be to thy confusion; for I shall clear myself; I will return with some proofs that shall convince thee, Obadiah, that thou art highly imposed on. [*Exit.*

Col. F. Then there will be no staying for me, that's certain—what the devil shall I do? [*Aside.*

Obad. What monstrous works of iniquity are there in this world, Simon?

Col. F. Yea, the age is full of vice—'Sdeath, I am so confounded I know not what to say. [*Aside.*

Obad. Thou art disorder'd, friend—art thou not well?

Col. F. My spirit is greatly troubled, and something telleth me, that though I have wrought a good work in converting this maiden, this tender maiden, yet my labour will be in vain; for the evil spirit fighteth against her: and I see, yea I see with the eye of my inward man, that satan will re-buffet her again, whenever I withdraw myself from her; and she will, yea, this very damsel will return again to that abomination from whence I have retriev'd her, as it were, yea, as if it were out of the jaws of the fiend.—

Miss L. I must second him. [*Aside*] What meaneth this struggling within me? I feel the spirit resisteth the vanities of this world, but the flesh is rebellious, yea, the flesh—I greatly fear the flesh and the weakness thereof—hum—

Obad. The maid is inspir'd. [*Aside*] Prodigious! The damsel is filled with the spirit—Sarah.

Enter MRS. PRIM.

Mrs. P. I am greatly rejoiced to see such a change in our beloved Anne. I came to tell thee that supper stayeth for thee.

Col. F. I am not disposed for thy food; my spirit longeth for more delicious meat!—fain would I redeem this maiden from the tribe of sinners, and break those cords asunder wherewith she is bound—hum—

Miss L. Something whispers in my ears, methinks—that I must be subject to the will of this good man, and from him only must hope for consolation—hum—[It also telleth me that I am a chosen vessel to raise up seed to the faithful, and that thou must consent that we two be one flesh according to the word—hum—

Obad. What a revelation is here! This is certainly part of thy vision, friend; this is the maiden's growing unto thy side: ah! with what willingness should I give thee my consent, could I give thee her fortune too—but thou wilt never get the consent of the wicked ones.

Col. F. I wish I was sure of yours. [*Aside.*

Obad. Thy soul rejoiceth, yea, rejoiceth, I say, to find the spirit within thee; for lo, it moveth thee with natural agitation—yea, with natural agitation towards

this good man—yea, it stirreth, as one may say—
—yea, verily I say, it stirreth up thy inclination—
yea, as one would stir a pudding.

All. Hum!

Miss. L. I see, I see! the spirit guiding of thy hand, good Obadiah Prim, and now behold thou art signing thy consent—and now I see myself within thy arms, my friend and brother, yea, I am become bone of thy bone, and flesh of thy flesh. [*Embracing him*] Hum—

Mrs. P. The spirit hath greatly moved them both—friend Prim, thou must consent; there's no resisting of the spirit!

Obad. Fetch me the pen and ink, Sarah—and my hand shall confess its obedience to the spirit.

[*Exit Mrs. Prim.*]

Col. F. I wish it were over.

Re-enter MRS. PRIM, with Pen and Ink.

Miss L. I tremble lest this quaking rogue should return, and spoil all. [*Aside.*]

Obad. Here, friend, do thou write what the spirit prompteth, and I will sign it. [*Col. F. sits down.*]

Col. F. [*Reads*] *This is to certify all whom it may concern, that I do freely give all my right and title in Anne Lovely to Simon Pure, and my full consent that she shall become his wife according to the form of marriage. Witness my hand.*

Obad. That's enough—give me the pen. [*Signs it.*]

Enter BETTY, running to MISS LOVELY.

Betty. Oh! madam, madam, here's the quaking man again: he has brought a coachman, and two or three more.

Miss L. Rain'd past redemption!

[*Aside to the Colonel.*]

Col. F. No, no; one minute sooner had spoil'd all; but now—here's company coming, friend, give me the paper. [*Going to Prim hastily.*]

Obad. Here it is, Simon; and I wish thee happy with the maiden.

Miss L. 'Tis done; and now, devil, do thy worst.

Enter SIMON PURE, Coachman, and others.

Simon. Look thee, friend, I have brought these people to satisfy thee that I am not that impostor which thou didst take me for: this is the man that did drive the leathern conveniency, and brought me from Bristol—and this is—

Col. F. Lookye, friend, to save the court the trouble of examining witnesses—I plead guilty, ha, ha!

Obad. How's this? Is not thy name Pure then?

Col. F. No, really, sir; I only made bold with this gentleman's name—but here I give it up safe and sound: it has done the business I had occasion for, and now I intend to wear my own, which shall be at his service upon the same occasion at any time.—Ha, ha, ha!

Simon. Oh! the wickedness of the age!

[Exit Coachman, &c.]

Obad. I am struck dumb with thy impudence, Anne; thou hast deceiv'd me—and perchance undone thyself.

Mrs. P. Thou art a dissembling baggage, and shame will overtake thee. *[Exit.]*

Simon. I am grieved to see thy wife so much troubled: I will follow and console her. *[Exit.]*

Enter Servant.

Serv. Thy brother guardians inquire for thee: here is another man with them.

Miss L. Who can that other man be? *[To Col. F.]*

Col. F. 'Tis Freeman, a friend of mine, whom I ordered to bring the rest of the guardians here.

Enter SIR PHILIP MODELOVE, TRADELOVE, PERIWINKLE, and FREEMAN.

Free. Is all safe? Did my letter do you service?

[Aside to the Colonel.]

Col. F. All, all's safe! ample service. *[Aside.]*

Sir P. Miss Nancy, how dost do, child?

Miss L. Don't call me miss, friend Philip; my name is Anne, thou knowest.—

Sir P. What, is the girl metamorphos'd?

Miss L. I wish thou wert so metamorphos'd. Ah!

Philip, throw off that gaudy attire, and wear the clothes becoming thy age.

Obad. I am ashamed to see these men. [*Aside.*

Sir P. My age! the woman is possess'd.

Col. F. No, thou art possess'd rather, friend.

Trade. Harkye, miss Lovely, one word with you.

[*Takes hold of her Hand.*

Col. F. This maiden is my wife, thanks to my friend Prim, and thou hast no business with her.

[*Takes her from him.*

Trade. His wife! harkye, Mr. Freeman.

Per. Why you have made a very fine piece of work of it, Mr. Prim.

Sir P. Married to a quaker! thou art a fine fellow to be left guardian to an orphan truly—there's a husband for a young lady!

Col. F. When I have put on my beau clothes, sir Philip, you'll like me better—

Sir P. Thou wilt make a very scurvy bean—friend—

Col. F. I believe I can prove it under your hand that you thought me a very fine gentleman in the Park t'other day, about thirty-six minutes after eleven; will you take a pinch, sir Philip?—One of the finest snuff-boxes you ever saw.

[*Offers him Snuff.*

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! I am overjoyed, 'faith I am, if thou be'st the gentleman—I own I did give my consent to the gentleman I brought here to-day—but whether this is he I can't be positive.

Obad. Canst thou not!—Now I think thou art a fine fellow to be left guardian to an orphan.—Thou shallow-brain'd shuttlecock, he may be a pickpocket for aught thou dost know.

Per. You would have been two rare fellows to have been entrusted with the sole management of her fortune, would ye not, think ye? But Mr. Tradelove and myself shall take care of her portion.—

Trade. Ay, ay, so we will—Didn't you tell me the Dutch merchant desired me to meet him here, Mr. Freeman?

Free. I did so, and I am sure he will be here, if you'll have a little patience.

Col. F. What, is Mr. Tradelove impatient? Nay, then, ib ben gereet voor your, he be, Jan Van Tintam-tirelereletta Heer Van Feignwell, vergeeten!

Trade. Oh! pox of the name! what have you trick'd me too, Mr. Freeman?

Col. F. Trick'd, Mr. Tradelove! did not I give you two thousand pounds for your consent fairly? And now do you tell a gentleman he has trick'd you?

Per. So, so, you are a pretty guardian, 'faith, to sell your charge: what, did you look upon her as part of your stock?

Obad. Ha, ha, ha! I am glad thy knavery is found out, however—I confess the maiden over-reached me, and I had no sinister end at all.

Per. Ay, ay, one thing or other over-reached you all.—but I'll take care he shall never finger a penny of her money, I warrant you—over-reach'd, quotha! Why I might have been over-reach'd too, if I had no more wit: I don't know but this very fellow may be him that was directed to me from Grand Cairo t'other day. Ha, ha, ha!

Col. F. The very same.

Per. Are you so, sir? but your trick would not pass upon me.

Col. F. No, as you say, at that time it did not, that was not my lucky hour—but, harkye, sir, I must let you into one secret—you may keep honest John Trades-cant's coat on, for your uncle, sir Toby Periwinkle, is not dead—so the charge of mourning will be saved, ha, ha, ha!—Don't you remember Mr. Pillage, your uncle's steward? Ha, ha, ha!

Per. Not dead! I begin to fear I am trick'd too.

Col. F. Don't you remember the signing of a lease, Mr. Periwinkle?

Per. Well, and what signifies that lease, if my uncle is not dead?—Ha! I am sure it was a lease I signed.—

Col. F. Ay, but it was a lease for life, sir, and of this beautiful tenement, I thank you.

[*Taking hold of Miss Lovely.*

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha! Neighbour's fare.

Free. So then, I find, you are all trick'd, ha, ha!

Per. I am certain I read as plain a lease as ever I read in my life.

Col. F. You read a lease I grant you; but you sign'd this contract. *[Showing a Paper.]*

Per. How durst you put this trick upon me, Mr. Freeman? Didn't you tell me my uncle was dying?

Free. And would tell you twice as much to serve my friend, ha, ha!

Sir P. What, the learned and famous Mr. Periwinkle chous'd too!—Ha, ha, ha!—I shall die with laughing, ha, ha, ha!

Trade. Well, since you have out-witted us all, pray you what and who are you, sir?

Sir P. Sir, the gentleman is a fine gentleman.—I am glad you have got a person, madam, who understands dress and good breeding.—I was resolved she should have one of my choosing.

Trade. A beau! nay, then, she is finely help'd up.,

Miss L. Why beaus are great encouragers of trade, sir, ha, ha, ha!

Col. F. Lookye, gentlemen—I am the person who can give the best account of myself; and I must beg sir Philip's pardon, when I tell him, that I have as much aversion to what he calls dress and breeding, as I have to the enemies of my religion. I have had the honour to serve his majesty, and headed a regiment of the bravest fellows that ever push'd bayonet in the throat of a Frenchman; and notwithstanding the fortune this lady brings me, whenever my country wants my aid, this sword and arm are at her service.

And now, my fair, if thou'lt but deign to smile,

I meet a recompense for all my toil:

Love and religion ne'er admit restraint,

And force makes many sinners, not one saint;

Still free as air the active mind does rove,

And searches proper objects for its love;

But that once fix'd, 'tis past the power of art

To chase the dear idea from the heart:

'Tis liberty of choice that sweetens life,

Makes the glad husband, and the happy wife.

[Exeunt.]

EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. SEWEL.

WHAT new strange ways our modern beaux devise!
What trials of love's skill to gain the prize!
The heathen gods, who never matter'd rapes,
Scarce wore such strange variety of shapes:
The devil take their odious, barren skulls,
To court in form of *snakes* and filthy *bulls*:
Old Jove once nick'd it too, as I am told,
In a whole lapful of true, standard gold;
How must his godship then fair *Danae* warm!
In trucking *ware* for *ware* there is no harm.
Well, after all that, *money* has a charm.
But now, indeed, that stale invention's past;
Besides, you know, that *guineas* fall so fast,
Poor nymph must come to pocket-piece at last.
Old Harry's face, or good queen *Bess's* ruff—
Not that I'd take 'em—may do well enough;
No—my ambitious spirit's far above
Those little tricks of mercenary love.
That man be mine, who, like the col'nel here,
Can top his character in every sphere;
Who can a thousand ways employ his wit,
Out-promise statesmen, and out-cheat a cit:
Beyond the colours of a trav'ler paint,
And cant, and ogle too—beyond a saint.
The last disguise most pleas'd me, I confess;
There's something tempting in the preaching dress;
And pleas'd me more than once a *dame* of note,
Who lov'd her *husband* in his *footman's* coat.
To see one eye in wanton motions play'd:
The other to the heav'nly regions stray'd,
As if it for its fellow frailties pray'd:
But yet I hope, for all that I have said,
To find my spouse a *man of war* in *bed*.

THE
Chapter of Accidents.

A COMEDY.

BY MISS LEE.

CORRECTLY GIVEN, FROM COPIES USED IN THE THEATRES,

BY

THOMAS DIBDIN,

OF THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.

Author of several Dramatic Pieces, &c.



Printed at the Chiswick Press,

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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THE CHAPTER OF ACCIDENTS

WAS produced at the Haymarket Theatre in the year 1780. It is built on Diderot's **PÈRE DE FAMILLE**, and experienced a degree of well-deserved success, which seems only to have increased on repetition.

It is at present revived at Drury Lane Theatre, to introduce a young debutante of considerable promise, and is likely to hold a place among some of the most successful reproductions of the season.

It is said this comedy was refused at Covent Garden before it was presented to the elder Mr. Colman at the Haymarket.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY GEORGE COLMAN, ESQ.

SPOKEN BY MR. PALMER.

LONG has the passive stage, howe'er absurd,
Been rul'd by *names*, and govern'd by a *word*,
Some poor *cant term*, like magic spells, can awe,
And bind our realms, like a dramatic law.
When Fielding, humour's favourite child, appear'd,
Low was the word; a word each author fear'd!
Till,chas'd at length by pleasantry's bright ray,
Nature and mirth resum'd their legal sway;
And Goldsmith's genius bask'd in open day.

No beggar, howe'er poor, a cur can lack;
Poor bards, of critic cures, can keep a pack.
One yelper silenc'd, twenty barkers rise,
And with new *howls* their *snarlings* still disguise.
Low banish'd, the word *sentiment* succeeds;
And at their shrine the modern playwright bleeds.
Hard fate! but let each would-be critic know
That *sentiments* from genuine feelings flow.
Critics in vain declaim, and write, and rail:
Nature, eternal nature, will prevail.
Give me the bard who makes me laugh and cry,
Diverts and moves, and all, I scarce know why!
Untaught by commentators, French or Dutch,
Passion still answers to th' electric touch.
Reason, like Falstaff, claims, when all is done,
The honours of the field already won.

To-night, our author's is a mix'd intent:
Passion and humour, *low* and *sentiment*:
Smiling in tears—a serio-comic play—
Sunshine and shower—a kind of April day!
A lord, whose pride is in his honour plac'd;
A governor, with av'rice not disgrac'd;

An humble priest! a lady, and a lover
So full of virtue *some of it runs over.*
No temporary touches, no allusions
To camps, reviews, and all our late confusions;
No personal reflections, no sharp satire,
But a mere chapter from the book of nature.
Wrote by a woman too! the muses now
Few liberties to naughty men allow;
But like old maids on earth, resolv'd to vex,
With cruel coyness treat the other sex.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

As originally acted.

<i>Lord Glenmore</i>	<i>Mr. Bensley.</i>
<i>Governor Harcourt</i>	<i>Mr. Wilson.</i>
<i>Woodville</i>	<i>Mr. Palmer.</i>
<i>Captain Harcourt</i>	<i>Mr. Bannister, jun.</i>
<i>Grey</i>	<i>Mr. Aickin.</i>
<i>Vane</i>	<i>Mr. La Mash.</i>
<i>Jacob</i>	<i>Mr. Edwin.</i>
<i>Cecilia</i>	<i>Miss Farren.</i>
<i>Miss Mortimer</i>	<i>Mrs. Cuyler.</i>
<i>Mrs. Warner</i>	<i>Mrs. Love.</i>
<i>Bridget</i>	<i>Mrs. Wilson.</i>

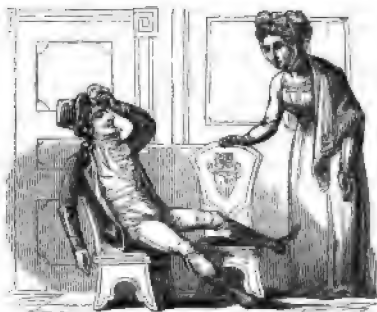
Drury Lane, 1816. Covent Garden, 1792.

<i>Lord Glenmore</i>	<i>Mr. R. Philips.</i>	<i>Mr. Aickin.</i>
<i>Governor Harcourt</i>	<i>Mr. Dowton.</i>	<i>Mr. Wilson.</i>
<i>Woodville</i>	<i>Mr. Wallack.</i>	<i>Mr. Holman.</i>
<i>Captain Harcourt</i>	<i>Mr. S. Penley.</i>	<i>Mr. Davies.</i>
<i>Grey</i>	<i>Mr. Powell.</i>	<i>Mr. Hull.</i>
<i>Vane</i>	<i>Mr. Harley.</i>	<i>Mr. Bernard.</i>
<i>Jacob</i>	<i>Mr. Oxberry.</i>	<i>Mr. Blanchard.</i>
<i>Cecilia</i>	<i>Miss Murray.</i>	<i>Miss Brunton.</i>
<i>Miss Mortimer</i>	<i>Miss Boyce.</i>	<i>Miss Chapman.</i>
<i>Mrs. Warner</i>	<i>Miss Tidswell.</i>	<i>Mrs. Davenett.</i>
<i>Bridget</i>	<i>Miss Kelly.</i>	<i>Mrs. Wells.</i>

SCENE—LONDON.

TIME—*Twenty-four Hours.*

ACT THE FIRST.



SCENE I. A Hall.

Enter VANE, in a Riding-dress, followed by a Footman.

Vane. **R**UN, and tell Mrs. Warner, my lord is at hand; and bid the butler send me a bottle of hock. [*Throws himself along the hall Chairs, wiping his Forehead*] Phew! the months have jumbled out of their places, and we have July in September.

Enter MRS. WARNER.

Mrs. W. Servant, Mr. Vane.

Vane. Ah! my dear creature! how have you done these fifty ages?

Mrs. W. Why, methinks you are grown mighty grand, or you would have come to the still-room to ask; will you choose any chocolate?

Vane. Why don't you see I am dead? absolutely dead; and, if you was to touch me, I should shake to mere dust, like an Egyptian mummy. Because it was not provoking enough to lounge away a whole summer

in the country, here am I driven up to town, as if the devil was at my heels, in the shape of our hopeful heir, who has neither suffered my lord nor me to rest one moment, through his confounded impatience to see his uncle.

Mrs. W. Umph—he'll have enough of the old gentleman presently. He is the very moral of my poor dear lady, his sister, who never was at peace herself, nor suffered any one else to be so. Such a house as we have had ever since he came! Why, he is more full of importance and airs than a bailiff in possession; and hectors over miss Mortimer, till she almost keeps her chamber to avoid him.

Vane. Hates miss Mortimer! Why, here'll be the devil to pay about her, I suppose!

Mrs. W. Hate her? ay, that he does. He looked as if he could have killed her, the moment she came down to see him; and got into his chamber presently after, where he sends for me. "Who is this young woman, Mrs. What's-your-name?" says he.—"Why, sir," says I, "she is the orphan of a colonel Mortimer, whose intimacy with my lord," says I.—"Pho, pho," says he, "all that I know, woman; what does she do in this house?" says he; his face wrinkling all over like cream, when it's skimming.—"Why, sir," says I, "her father unluckily died just before the duke his brother, and so could not leave her one shilling of all that fine fortune; and so my lord intends to marry her to Mr. Woodville," says I.—"He does," cries he; "heaven be praised I'm come in time to mar that dainty project, however. You may go, woman, and tell miss I don't want any thing more to-night." So up goes I to miss Mortimer, and tells her all this. Lord! how glad she was, to find he intended to break the match, though she can't guess what he means.

Vane. Upon my soul, I think it is full as hard to guess what she means. What the devil, will not my lord's title, fortune, and only son, be a great catch for a girl without a friend or a shilling?

Mrs. W. Ay; but I could tell you a little story would explain all. You must know——

[Sits down. A loud knocking.

Vane. [Starts up] Zounds, here's my lord!

[Exit confusedly.]

SCENE II. An Anti-chamber.

Enter LORD GLENMORE and GOVERNOR HARCOURT meeting; the latter hobbling.

Lord G. You are welcome to England, brother! I am sorry your native air pays you so ill a compliment after sixteen years absence.

Gov. H. Faith, my lord, and so am I too, I promise you: I put up with these things tolerably well in the Indies; I did not go there to be happy; but after all my labours, to find I have just got the money when it is out of my power to enjoy it, is a cursed stroke: like a fine ship of war, I am only come home to be dismasted and converted into an hospital. However, I am glad you hold it better: I don't think you looked as well when we parted. My sister, poor Susan! she is gone too: well, we can never live a day the longer for thinking on't. Where's Frank? Is he still the image of his mother?

Lord G. Just as you left him; but that the innocence of the boy is dignified by the knowledge of the man.

Gov. H. He will hardly remember his old uncle! I did love the rogue, that's the truth on't; and never looked at my money-bags but I thought of him. However you have provided him a wife?

Lord G. I have; you saw her on your arrival, I suppose, for I left her in town to attend a sick aunt. Poor Mortimer! he died one month before the duke his brother, and missed a fine title and estate. You know how I loved the honest fellow, and cannot wonder I took home his orphan daughter as a match for Woodville.

Gov. H. Brother, brother, you are too generous; it

is your foible, and artful people know how to convert it to their own advantage.

Lord G. It is, if a foible, the noblest incident to humanity. Sophia has birth, merit, accomplishments; and wants nothing but money to qualify her for any rank.

Gov. H. Can she have a worse want on earth? Birth, merit, accomplishments, are the very things that render money more essential.

Lord G. You are too captious, brother!

Gov. H. And you too placid, brother! If, like me, you had been toiling a third of your days to compass a favourite design, and found it disappointed at the moment you thought it complete, what would even your serene lordship say and do? Here have I promised myself a son in yours, an heir in yours; instead of which——

Lord G. His marriage with miss Mortimer will not make him unworthy either title.

Gov. H. Never mention her name to me I beg, my lord! the wife I would have given him, has beauty without knowing it, innocence without knowing it, because she knows nothing else, and, to surprise you further, forty thousand pounds without knowing it; nay, to bring all your surprises together, is my daughter without knowing it.

Lord G. Your daughter? Why, have you married since my sister's death? Your daughter by her you lost before you went abroad.

Gov. H. Yes, but I shall find her again, I believe. I know you will call this one of my odd whims as usual, but we have all some; witness this dainty project of yours; and so I will tell you the truth in spite of that project. From the very birth of this girl, I saw her mother would spoil her, and, had she lived, proposed kidnapping miss in her infancy.

Lord G. Kidnap your own daughter! Why, brother, I need only prove this to obtain a commission of lunacy, and shut you up for life.

Gov. H. Why, though my wife was your lordship's sister, I will venture to tell you she was plaguy fantastical, and contrived to torment me as much with her virtues, as others by their vices. Such a fuss about her delicacy, her sensibility, and her refinement, that I could neither look, move, nor speak, without offending one or the other; and execrated the inventor of the jargon every hour in the four and twenty: a jargon, I resolved my girl should never learn; and heaven no sooner took her mother (heaven be praised for all things!) than I dispatched her draggle-tailed French governess; made a bonfire of every book on education; whipped miss into a post-chaise, under a pretence of placing her in a nunnery; instead of which, I journeyed into Wales, and left her in the care of a poor curate's wife, whose name was up as the best housewife in the whole country; then returned with a solemn history of her death in the small-pox.

Lord G. Well, this is indeed astonishing! an admirable tutoress truly for my niece!

Gov. H. Yes, but there's a better jest than that.

Lord G. Indeed! is that possible?

Gov. H. How do you think I contrived to make them obey my instructions? I saw they suspected I was some rich humourist, and was afraid they would after all make a little bit of a gentlewoman of her, for which reason, except the first year in advance, they never had a single shilling of my money.

Lord G. This is almost incredible! And so you left your only child to the charity of strangers?

Gov. H. No, no, not so bad as that neither. You remember my honest servant Hardy? After the poor fellow's leg was shot off in my tent, I promised him a maintenance; so intrusting him with the secret, I ordered him to live in the neighbourhood, have an eye on the girl, and claim her if ill used: fine accounts I had from him, faith! The old parson and his wife having no children, and not finding any one own her, gave out she was theirs, and doated on her; in short, she is the little wonder of the country; tall as the

palm-tree! with cheeks, that might shame the drawing-room; and eyes, will dim the diamonds I have brought over to adorn them. This confounded gout has kept me in continual alarm, or else she should have spoke for herself.

Lord G. Why then does not Hardy bring her up to you?

Gov. H. Why, for two very sufficient reasons. In the first place, that identical parson paid him the last compliment, that is, buried him a twelvemonth ago; and in the second, they would hardly entrust her to any man but him who delivered her to them. Here was a girl, my lord, to support your title, of which I dare swear you are as fond as ever.

Lord G. I thank your intention, brother; but am far from wishing the chief accomplishments of Woodville's lady should be the making cream cheeses, goats whey, and elder wine.

Gov. H. Let me tell your lordship, women were never better than when those were the chief accomplishments. But I may be ridiculous my own way without being singular. Harcourt shall have my girl, and my money too. Cream cheeses, quotha! no, no, making cream faces is an accomplishment which the belles of these days oftener excel in.

Lord G. I would not advise you to publish this opinion, governor; for though you should call no anger into the cheeks of the ladies, I doubt you would into their hearts.

Gov. H. But where is this son of yours? sure he has not totally forgot his old uncle?

Lord G. He will be here immediately.

Gov. H. Nay, I must e'en take an old man's fate, and follow his mistress without complaint.

Lord G. You have no reason for the reproach; this is not his hour for visiting miss Mortimer.

Gov. H. Miss Mortimer! ha, ha, ha! why, do you think I took her for his mistress? What, I warrant I can tell you news of your own family, though I have hardly been three days in it. Woodville keeps a girl,

and in great splendour! nay, they tell me, that the unconscionable young rogue encroaches so far on the privileges of threescore, as to intend marrying the slut.

Lord G. You jest, surely!

Gov. H. There's no jest like a true one. Ha, ha, ha! how foolish you look! this is your innocent elegance; and this is the blessed effect of letting him live out of your own house!

Lord G. Pr'ythee reserve your raillery, sir, for some less interesting occasion. To have my views thus in a moment overturned! Where does she live?

Gov. H. Ha, ha, ha! Oh, the difference of those little syllables me and thee! now you can guess what made me so peevish, I suppose? As to where miss lives, I have not heard; but somewhere near his lodgings. A devilish fine girl she is by-the-by. Ah, I told you twenty years ago, you would spoil this boy; entirely spoil him.

Lord G. Zounds, governor, you have a temper Socrates himself could not have supported. Is this a time for old sayings of twenty years ago? Finish dressing; by that time your nephew will be here, and I shall have reflected on this matter.

Gov. H. With all my heart. 'Tis but a boyish frolic, and so good morning to you. Here; where's my triumvirate? Pompey! Anthony! Caesar! [Exit.

Lord G. A boyish frolic truly! many a foolish fellow's life has been marked by such a boyish frolic. But her residence is the first object of my inquiry. Vane!

Enter VANE.

Is not my son come?

Vane. This moment, my lord; and walks till the governor is ready.

Lord G. Vane! I have deserved you should be attached to me, and I hope you are?

Vane. My lord!—What the devil is he at? [Aside.

Lord G. This strange old governor has alarmed me a good deal; you are more likely to know, whether

with reason, than I can be. Have you heard any thing important of my son lately?

Vane. Never, my lord.

Lord G. Not that he keeps a mistress? What does the fool smile at? [*Aside.*]

Vane. I did not think that any thing important, my lord.

Lord G. I do, sir; and am told a more important thing; that he even thinks of marrying her. Now, though I cannot credit this, I would choose to know what kind of creature she is. Could not you assume a clownish disguise, and, scraping an acquaintance with her people, learn something of her character and designs?

Vane. Doubtless, to oblige your lordship, I could do such a thing. But if Mr. Woodville's sharp eyes (and love will render them still sharper) should discover me, I might chance to get a good drubbing in the character of a spy.

Lord G. Oh, it is very improbable he should suspect you: at the worst, name your employer, and your bones are safe. The office perhaps is not very agreeable, but I impose few such on you: execute it well, and you shall remember it with pleasure. I will detain Woodville till you are ready; and, as I doubt not that his next visit will be to this creature, by following him you will find out where she lives. Prepare then as quick as possible, and send me word when you are ready, for till then I will not suffer him to depart.

[*Erit.*]

Vane. A pretty errand this his formal lordship has honoured me with. Um, if I betray him, shall I not get more by it? Ay, but our heir is such a sentimental spark, that when his turn was served, he might betray me. Were he one of our harum-skarum, good-natured, good-for-nothing fellows, it would go against my conscience to do him an ill turn. I believe I stand well in my lord's will, if counsellor Puzzle may be trusted (and when he can get nothing by a lie perhaps he may

tell truth), so, like all thriving men, I will be honest because it best serves my interest. [Exit.

SCENE III. *A confined Garden.*

WOODVILLE *discovered walking about.*

Wood. How tedious is this uncle! how tedious every body! Was it not enough to spend two detestable months from my love, merely to preserve the secret, but I must be tantalized with seeing, without arriving at her? Yet how, when I do see her, shall I appease that affecting pride of a noble heart, conscious too late of its own inestimable value? Why was I not uniformly just? I had then spared myself the bitterest of regrets.

Enter CAPTAIN HARCOURT.

Capt. H. Woodville! how do'st? Don't you, in happy retirement, pity me my Ealing and Acton marches and countermarches, as Foote has it? But, methinks thy face is thinner and longer than a forsaken nymph's, who is going through the whole ceremony of nine month's repentance. What, thou'st fallen in love? rustically too! Nay, pr'ythee don't look so very lamentable.

Wood. Ridiculous! How can we have an eye or ear for pleasure, when our fate hangs over us undecided?

Capt. H. I guess what you mean; but why make mountains of mole-hills? Is the rosy-fisted damsel so obstinately virtuous?

Wood. Imagine a fair favourite of Phœbus in all respects; since, while her face caught his beams, her heart felt his genius! Imagine all the graces hid under a straw hat and russet gown; imagine——

Capt. H. You have imagined enough of conscience; and now for a few plain facts if you please.

Wood. To such a lovely country maid I lost my heart last summer; and soon began to think romances the only true histories, and happiness not merely possible in a cottage, but only possible there.

Capt. H. Well, all the philosophers (ancient and

modern) would never be able to convince me a coach was not a mighty pretty vehicle, and the lasses as good-natured in town as country. But pray let us know why you laid aside the pastoral project of eating fat bacon and exercising a crook all day, that thou mightest conclude the evening with the superlative indulgence of a peat-fire and a bed stuffed with straw?

Wood. Why, faith, by persuading the dear girl to share mine.

Capt. H. Oh, now you talk the language of the world; and does that occasion thee such a melancholy face?

Wood. How ignorant are you both of me and her! Every moment since I prevailed has only served to convince me I can sooner live without every thing else than her; and this fatal leisure (caused by my absence with my father), she has employed in adding every grace of art to those of nature; till, thoroughly shocked at her situation, her letters are as full of grief as love, and I dread to hear every hour I have lost her.

Capt. H. I dread much more to hear you have lost yourself. Ah, my dear Woodville, the most dangerous charm of love is, every man conceits no other ever found out his method of loving; but, take my word for it, your Dolly may be brought back to a milk-maid. Leave her to herself awhile, and she'll drop the celestials, I dare swear.

Wood. She is too noble; and nothing but the duty I owe to so indulgent a father, prevents me from offering her all the reparation in my power.

Capt. H. A fine scheme truly! Why, Woodville, art frantico? To predestinate yourself among the horned cattle of Doctor's Commons, and take a wife for the very reason which makes so many spend thousands to get rid of one.

Wood. To withdraw an amiable creature from her duty, without being able to make her happy, is to me a very serious reflection: nay, I sinned, I may say, from virtue; and had I been a less grateful son, might have called myself a faultless lover.

Capt. H. Well, well, man, you are young enough to

trust to time, and he does wonders. Above all, shake off this mental lethargy.

Wood. I will endeavour to take your advice. Should she fly, I were undone for ever. But you are no judge of my Cecilia's sincerity. How should you know those qualities which rise with every following hour? Can you think so meanly of me, as that I could be duped by a vulgar wretch; a selfish wanton? Oh no, she possesses every virtue but the one I have robbed her of. [Exit.

Capt. H. Poor Frank! did I love your welfare less, I could soon ease your heart, by acquainting you of my marriage with miss Mortimer; but now the immediate consequence would be, this ridiculous match. How, if I apprise either my lord or the governor? both obstinate in different ways: I might betray only to ruin him. A thought occurs: my person is unknown to her; choosing an hour when he is absent, I'll pay her a visit, offer her an advantageous settlement, and learn from her behaviour her real character and intentions. [Exit.

ACT THE SECOND.



SCENE I.

An elegant Dressing-room, with a Toilette, richly ornamented. A Harpsichord, and a Frame, with Embroidery.

BRIDGET discovered fetching various small Jars with Flowers, and talks as she places them.

Brid. Lord help us, how fantastical some folks not an hundred miles off are! If I can imagine what's come to my lady: here has she been sighing and groaning these two months, because her lover was in the country; and now, truly, she's sighing and groaning because he is come to town. Such maggots indeed! I might as well have staid in our parish all the days of my life, as to live mew'd up with her in this dear sweet town; I could but have done that with a virtuous lady, although I know she never was at Fox-hall in all her jaunts, and we two should cut such a figure there! Bless me, what's come to the glass? [*Setting her Dress*] Why, sure it is dulled with her eternal sighing, and makes me look as frightful as herself! O, here she

comes, with a face as long and dismal as if he was going to be married, and to somebody else too.

Enter CECILIA, and throws herself on the Sofa, leaning on her Hand.

Cecil. What can detain Woodville such an age? It is an hour at least since he rode by. Run, Bridget, and look if you can see him through the drawing-room window.

Brid. Yes, madam. [*Exit, eyeing her with Contempt.*]

Cecil. How wearisome is every hour to the wretched! They catch at each future one, merely to while away the present; for, were Woodville here, could he relieve me from the torment of reflection; or the strong, though silent, acknowledgment my own heart perpetually gives of my error?

Brid. [*Without*] Here he comes, ma'am; here he comes!

Cecil. Does he? Run down then. [*Fluttered.*]

Brid. [*Without*] Dear me, no, 'tis not, neither;

Re-enter BRIDGET.

'Tis only the French ambassador's new cook, with his huge bag and long ruffles.

Cecil. Blind animal! Sure nothing is so tormenting as expectation.

Brid. La, ma'am, any thing will torment one when one has a mind to be tormented, which must be your case for sartin. What signifies sitting mope, mope, mope, from morning to night? You'd find yourself a deal better if you went out only two or three times a day. For a walk, we are next door to the Park, as I may say; and for a ride, such a dear sweet vis-a-vis and pretty horses might tempt any one. Then, as to company, you'll say, "A fig for your starched ladies, who owe their virtue to their ugliness!" Mine is very much at your service. [*Courtesies.*]

Cecil. How could I endure this girl, did I not know that her ignorance exceeds even her impertinence. [*Aside*] I have no pleasure in going abroad.

Brid. Oh la, ma'am, how should you know till you try? Sure every body must wish to see and be seen. Then there's such a delightful hurricane, all the world are busy, though most are doing nothing; to splash the mob, and drive against the people of quality. Oh, give me a coach, and London for ever and ever! You could but lock yourself up, were you as old and ugly as gay lady Grizzle at next door.

Cecil. Had I been so, I had continued happy.

Brid. La, ma'am, don't ye talk so purphanely! Happy to be old and ugly? Or, I'll tell you what: as you don't much seem to fancy going out, suppose you were to come down now and then (you know we have a pure large hall), and take a game of romps with us. If you were once to see our Jacob hunt the slipper, you would die with laughing! Madam Frisk, my last mistress, used, as soon as ever master was gone (and indeed he did not trouble her much with his company), to run down, draw up her brocaded niggie-de-gee, and fall to play at some good fun or other! Dear heart, we were as merry then as the day was long! I am sure I have never been half so happy since.

Cecil. I cannot possibly imitate the model you propose; but though I don't choose to go abroad, you may.

Brid. I don't love to go much among the mobility, neither. If indeed, madam, next winter you'd give me some of your tickets, I would fain go to a masquerade (it vexes me to see um stick in the thing-um-bobs for months together); and M^{rs}. Trim promises me the lent of a Venus's dress, which, she says, I shall cut a figure in. Now, ma'am, if I had but some diamonds (for beggars wear diamonds there, they say), who knows but I might make my fortune, like you?

Cecil. Mar it, much rather, like me. That is no place for girls of your station, which exposes you to so much insult.

Brid. Ah, let me alone, madam, for taking care of number one. I ware never afeard but once in my whole life, and that ware of grandfar's ghost; for he

always hated I, and used to walk (poor soul!) in our barken, for all the world like an ass with a tie-wig on.

[A knocking.

Cecil. Hark! that sure is Woodville's knock! Fly, and see! [Exit Bridget. *Cecilia walks eagerly to the Door, and returns as eagerly*] Alas, is this my repentance? Dare I sin against my judgment?

Enter WOODVILLE.

Wood. My Cecilia! my soul! have I at last the happiness of beholding you? You know me too well to imagine I would punish myself by a moment's voluntary delay.

Cecil. Oh no, it is not that.

[They sit down on the Sofa.

Wood. Say you are glad to see me; afford me one kind word to atone for your cold looks. Are you not well?

Cecil. Rather say I am not happy. My dear Woodville, I am an altered being! Why have you reduced me to shrink thus in your presence? Oh, why have you made me unworthy of yourself?

[Leans against his Shoulder, weeping.

Wood. Cruel girl! is this my welcome? When did I appear to think you so?

Cecil. Tell me when any one else will think me otherwise.

Wood. Will you never be above so narrow a prejudice? Are we not the whole world to each other? Nay, dry your tears: allow me to dry them. [Kisses her] What is there in the reach of love or wealth I have not sought to make you happy?

Cecil. That which is the essence of all enjoyments, innocence! Oh, Woodville, you knew not the value of the heart whose peace you have destroyed. My sensibility first ruined my virtue, and then my repose. But though for you I consented to abandon an humble happy home, to embitter the age of my venerable father, and bear the contempt of the world, I can never support my own. My heart revolts against my situation, and hourly bids me renounce a splendour, which only

renders guilt more despicable. [*Rises*] I meant to explain this hereafter; but the agitation of my mind obliged me to lighten it immediately.

Wood. Is your affection then already extinct? For sure it must, when you can resolve to torture me thus!

Cecil. Were my love extinct, I might sink into a mean content! Oh, no! 'Tis to that alone I owe my resolution.

Wood. Can you then plunge me into despair? So young, so lovely too! Oh! where could you find so safe an asylum as my heart? Whither could you fly?

Cecil. I am obliged to you, sir, for the question; but who is it has made me thus destitute? I may retain your protection indeed, but at what price?

Wood. Give me but a little time, my love! I am equally perplexed between my father and my uncle; each of whom offers me a wife I can never love. Suffer them to defeat each other's schemes! Let me if possible be happy without a crime; for I must think it one to grieve a parent hitherto so indulgent. I will not put any thing in competition with your peace; and long for the hour when the errors of the lover will be absorbed in the merits of the husband.

Cecil. No, Woodville! That was, when innocent, as far above my hopes, as it is now beyond my wishes. I love you too sincerely to reap any advantage from so generous an error; yet you at once flatter and wound my heart, in allowing me worthy such a distinction; but love cannot subsist without esteem, and how should I possess yours when I have lost even my own?

Wood. It is impossible you should ever lose either, while so deserving of both. I am obliged to return directly, but will hasten to you the very first moment. When we meet again it must be with a smile, remember!

Cecil. It will when we meet again. Oh, how those words oppress me! [*Aside*] But do not regulate your conduct by mine, nor make me an argument with yourself for disobeying my lord; for here I solemnly swear never to accept you without the joint consent of both our fathers; and that I consider as an eternal abjura-

tion! But may the favoured woman you are to make happy, have all my love without my weakness!

[Exit in Tears.

Wood. Disinterested, exalted girl! Why add such a needless bar? For is it possible to gain my father's consent? And yet without her life would be insupportable! The censures of the world! What is that world to me? Were I weak enough to sacrifice her to the erroneous judgment of the malicious and unfeeling, what does it offer to reward me? Commendations I can never deserve, and riches I can never enjoy. [Exit.

SCENE II. *A Street before CECILIA's House.*

JACOB opens the Door and lets out WOODVILLE, who passes over the Stage; JACOB remains with his Hands in his Pockets, whistling. Enter VANE, disguised, with a Basket of Game in his Hand.

Vane. So, there he goes at last. I may open the attack without fear of a discovery, since our hopeful heir will hardly return directly. This intelligence of my landlord's at the Blue Posts has made the matter much easier. Um, a good subject! Sure I ought to know that bunkin's face! As I live, my playfellow at the parish-school, Jacob Gawky! Now for a touch of the old dialect. D'ye hire, young mon! Pray, do ye know where one Bett Dowson do live?

Jacob. Noa, not I.

Vane. Hay! Why, zure as two-pence, thou beest Jacob Gawky!

Jacob. Odsbodlikins! zo I be indeed! But, who beest thee?

Vane. What, doost not know thy ould zkchoolvellow, Wull, mun?

Jacob. Hay! What? Wull? Od rabbit it, if I ben't desprate glad to zee thee; where doost live now, mun?

Vane. Down at huome, in our parish. I be coomed up with Zor Isaac Promise to be meade excoisemun.

Jacob. Thee'st good luck, faith! wish, no odds to thee, my fortin ware as good! but theed'st always a

muortal good notion of wroiting and cyphers, while I don't knaw my own neame when I do zee it. What didst leave zea for?

Vane. Why, I ware afraid I should be killed before I comed to be a great mon: but what brought thee into this soine house?

Jacob. Fortin, Wull! Fortin. Didst thee knaw Nan o'th' mill?

Vane. Noa, not I.

Jacob. Od rabbit it! I thought every muortal soul had knawd zhe. Well, Nan and I ware such near neighbors, there ware only a barn between us; zhe ware a desperate zmart lass, that's the truth on't: and I had half a moind to teake to seyther's business, and marry zhe: but, ecod, the zimpletony grow'd so fond, that some how or other, I ware tired first! when behold you, zquire takes a fancy to me, and made I ouome and live at the hall; and as my head run all on tuown, when aw comed up to London, aw brought I wi'un: zo I thought to get rid that way of the bullocking of Nan.

Vane. But, Jacob, how didst get into thio soine house?

Jacob. Dang it, doan't I zeay, I'll tell the present! Zoa, as I ware zaying, one holiday I went to zee thio there church, wi' the top like a huge punch-bowl turned auver; and, dang it! who should arrive in the very nick, but madam Nan. Well, huome comes I as merry as a cricket; zquire caals for I in a muortal hurry; when who zould I zee, but madam Nan on her marrowbones a croying for dear loife! dang it, I thought at first I should ha' zwounded; zo a made a long zar-mant about 'ducing a poor girl, and zaid I should zar-tainly go to the divil for it, and then turned I off. But the best fun is to come, mun; rabbit me! if aw did not teake Nan into keeping himself; and zhe do flaunt it about, as foine—as a duchess.

Vane. A mighty religious moral gentleman, truly!
[*Aside*] Well, how came you to this plect?

Jacob. Why, Meay-day, walking in Common-garden

to smell the pozeys, who zould I zee but our Bridget! I was muortal glad to zee her, you must needs think, and zhe got I this here pleast.

Vane. Wounds! dost live wi' a lord in this soine house?

Jacob. Noa; a leady, you fool! but zuch a leady, zuch a dear, easy, good-natured creature! zhe do never say noa, let we do what we wull.

Vane. Now to the point. [*Aside*] Is your lady married?

Jacob. Noa: but zhe's as good; and what'st think mun? to a lord's zon! though if a ware a king, aw would not be too good for zhe. A muortal fine comely mon too, who do love her, as aw do the eyes in his head. Couzin Bridget do tell I, zhe zeeded a letter where aw do zay aw wull ha' her any day of the week, whatever do come o'th' next. Why, I warrant they have 'pointed wedding-day!

Vane. The devil they have? My lord will go mad at this news. [*Aside.*

Jacob. Lauk a deazy! how merry we will be on that day! Wo't come and junket wi' us?

Vane. Yes, yes, I shall certainly make one among you, either then or before. [*Aside*] But now I must goa and give this geame to zquire—zquire—what the dickens be his name! I do always forget it, there zould be a ticket somewhere: zoa, rabbit me! if some of your London faulk ha' no' cut it off, out o'fun!

Jacob. Ha, ha, ha! 'ecod, nothing more likelier. [*Both laugh foolishly*] The rum people be zo zsharp as needles. But there's no pleast like it for all that; I be set upon living and dying in it.

Vane. Now to secure my return if necessary. [*Aside*] I'll tell thee what, Jacob! seeing as how I ha' lost thie there direction, do thee teake the basket: 'tis only a present of geame from the parson o' our parish; and, if zo be I can't find the gentleman, why 'tis honestly mine. Meay be I'll come, and teake a bit o' supper wi' ye.

Jacob. Wull ye indeed? dang it! that's clever; and

then you'll see our Bridget. She's a muortal smart lass, I promise ye! and, meay be, may'st get a peap at my leady, who's desperate handsome! Good bye t'ye. Bridget's zo comical! od rabbit it, we'll be main merry. [Exit.

Vane. Thus far I have succeeded to admiration! our young heir has really a mind to play the fool and marry his mistress! though, faith, marrying his own does not seem very inexcusable, when so many of his equals modestly content themselves with the cast-offs of half their acquaintance. [Exit.

SCENE III. *An Apartment in CECILIA'S House.*

Enter BRIDGET.

Brid. So, just the old story again! crying, crying for ever! Lord, if I was a man, I should hate such a whimpering—what would she have I wonder? to refuse such a handsome, genteel, good-natured man! and, I'll be sworn, he offered to marry her; for I listened with all my ears! Oh, that he would have me now! I should become my own coach prodigiously, that's a sure thing. [*A knocking*] Hay, who knocks?

Enter JACOB.

Jacob. A young mon do want my leady.

Brid. A man? what sort of a man?

Jacob. Why a mon—like—just such another as I.

Brid. No, no, no; that's not so easy to find. What can any man want with her? show him in here, Jacob.

Jacob. [*Returning in a kind of glee*] When shall we have the wedding, Bridget?

Brid. We shall have a burrying first, I believe.

Jacob. Od rabbit it! we won't be their seconds there, faith! [Exit.

Brid. Now, if he mistakes me for my lady, I shall find out what he wants.

Re-enter JACOB, with CAPTAIN HARCOURT, disguised.

Capt. H. Is that your lady? [*Surveying her.*

Jacob. He, he, he! lauk, zur, don't you know that's our Bridget?

Brid. So, deuce on him, there's my whole scheme spoiled! [*Aside*] My lady, sir, is engaged; but, if you tell me your business, it will do just as well.

Capt. H. For yourself it may, child!

[*Chucks her under the Chin.*]

Brid. What, you belong to Mr. Gargle the apothecary? or come from the jeweller on Ludgate-hill? or have a letter from——

Capt. H. The very person; you have hit it. And now, do me the favour to tell your lady, a stranger wishes to speak to her on particular business.

Brid. Very well, sir. Was ever handsome man so crabbed!

[*Aside. Exit.*]

Capt. H. 'Egad, if the mistress has half as much tongue as the maid, Woodville may catch me in the midst of my first speech. Now for my credentials! and here she comes! a lovely girl, indeed! I can scarce blame Frank, for she awes me.

Enter CECILIA, followed officiously by BRIDGET.

Cecil. I was informed, sir, you had particular business with me.

Capt. H. I took the liberty, madam—I say, madam, I——

Cecil. As I have neither friends or relations in London, [*Sighs*] I am at a loss to guess——

Capt. H. What I would communicate, madam, requires secrecy.

Cecil. Bridget, go where I ordered you just now.

Brid. Yes, madam.—But if I an't even with you for this——

[*Aside, and exit.*]

Cecil. I complied with your request, sir, without inquiring the motive; because you, I think, can have only one. My father, if I may trust my heart, has made you his messenger to an unwilling offender.

Capt. H. Pardon me, madam, but I refer you to this.

Cecil. [*Reads*] Madam,—Being certainly informed Mr. Woodville is on the point of marrying a lady chosen by his friends, when it is presumed you will be disen-

gaged, a nobleman of rank and estate above what he can ever possess, is thus early in laying his heart and fortune at your feet, lest some more lucky rival should anticipate him. The bearer is authorised to disclose all particulars, and offer you a settlement worthy your acceptance.—Deign, madam, to listen to him on the subject, and you will find the unknown lover as generous, and not less constant, than Woodville.—Good heavens! to what an insult have I exposed myself!

[Bursts into Tears, and sinks into a Chair, without minding Harcourt, who watches her with Irresolution.

Capt. H. What can I think? There is an air of injured delicacy in her which teaches me to reproach myself for a well-meant deceit. [Aside] If, madam—

Cecil. I had forgot this wretch. [Rises] Return, sir, to your vile employer; tell him, whoever he is, I am too sensible of the insult, though not entitled to resent it; tell him I have a heart above my situation, and that he has only had the barbarous satisfaction of adding another misery to those which almost overwhelmed me before.

Capt. H. Hear me, madam, I conjure you!

Cecil. Never! a word would contaminate me.

[Struggles to go off.

Capt. H. Nay, you shall. You do not know half the good consequences of this letter. I am the friend, the relation of Woodville—my name, Harcourt!

Cecil. Is it possible he should be so cruel, so unjust?

Capt. H. He is neither cruel nor unjust, but only unfortunate.—Hear.—He designs to marry you; this I learned from himself only this morning. As a proof of my sincerity, I will own I doubted your right to that mark of his esteem, and made this trial in consequence. Pleased to find you worthy of his rank, I feel shocked at reminding you, you ought not to share it. But, madam, if you truly love him, you cannot wish that to be just to you he should be unjust to those who have a prior right over him.—This shall positively be my last effort.

[Aside.

Cecil. A motive like yours, sir, will excuse any thing.

How little my happiness, honour, or interest, ever weighed against his need not be repeated; far be it from me now to disgrace him. He is apprised of my invincible objections to a match which will never take place. May he form a happier! while I, by a voluntary poverty, expiate my offence.

Har. Ma—ma—What the devil chokes me so? [*Aside*] I am struck with your sentiments, and must find you a proper asylum. The moment I saw you, I had hopes such manners could not veil an immoral heart. I have proved your sincerity, and owe a reparation to your delicacy. The proposed bride of Woodville is every way worthy that distinction; nor am I without hopes even she will be prevailed on to protect you. But I must not leave a doubt of my sincerity:—do you know miss Mortimer?

Cecil. I have seen the lady, sir.—But dare I credit my senses? has heaven formed two such hearts, and for me?

Har. With her your story will be buried for ever: and I think, the sooner you disappear, the more easily will you prevent Woodville's disobedience. I will open the affair to miss Mortimer directly, and if she acquiesces, desire her to call for you in person, to prevent the possibility of any artifice.

Cecil. He who inspired such sentiments, alone can reward them! Oh, sir, you have raised a poor desponding heart; but it shall be the business of my future life to deserve those favours I can never half repay.

Har. I find, by punishing me with acknowledgments, you are resolved to be obliged to me. The time is too precious to be wasted on such trifles. At seven, you shall have certain intelligence of my success; employ the interim to the best advantage, and hope every thing from daring to deserve well. [*Exit.*]

Cecil. Astonishing interposition of heaven!—Hope! What have I to hope?—But let the consciousness of acting rightly support me in the sad moment of renouncing Woodville, and in him all that rendered life desirable.

SCENE IV. LORD GLENMORE'S House.

Enter LORD GLENMORE and VANE.

Lord G. And are you sure of all this?

Vane. Absolutely, my lord. I have known the bumpkin, her footman, from the height of his own club.

Lord G. What a cursed infatuation! I know not what to resolve on.

Vane. If I may be permitted to advise, my lord—

Lord G. And who asked your advice, sir?

Vane. You have, my lord, formerly.

Lord G. Take care you stay till I do.—Leave me, sir.

Vane. If you don't like my advice, I shall give you my opinion very shortly.—A crusty crab!

[Exit, muttering.]

Lord G. This is the certain consequence of entrusting low people; and yet there is no doing without them.—I can never master my feelings enough to speak properly to Woodville on the subject, therefore must fix on some other method. *[Pauses]* That's a sure one, and falls heavy on the artful, aspiring creature only!—*Vane!*

Re-enter VANE.

Could not you procure me a travelling-chaise and four stout fellows immediately?

Vane. To be sure, my lord, I can order a chaise at any inn, if you choose it.

Lord G. Pho, pho! Do what I have ordered, and wait near the Horse-guards in about an hour; when I shall seize this insolent baggage, and convey her out of my son's reach. If we can contrive to frighten her into taking you as a husband, it will end all my fears, and shall be the making of your fortune.

Vane. 'Gad, I like the project well.—A handsome wife is the best bait when we fish for preferment; and this gives me a double claim both on father and son. *[Aside]* Nothing but the profound respect I have for your lordship could induce me to think of this; though born without rank and fortune, I have a soul, my lord—

Lord G. Come, come, my good lad, I guess what you would say; but we have no time for speeches.—I have set my heart on the success of this project; and you shall find your interest in indulging me.

[Exeunt severally.]

SCENE V. *MISS MORTIMER'S Apartment.*

Enter CAPTAIN HARCOURT, meeting Miss MORTIMER.

Har. If I were to judge of your temper by your looks, my dear, I should say it was uncommonly sweet, this morning.

Miss M. A truce with compliment; I must in reason renounce dear flattery after marriage.

Har. To flattery you never paid court; but the language of the heart and the world will sometimes resemble.—I ought, however, to praise your temper, for I am come to try it, and give you a noble opportunity of exerting its benevolence.

Miss M. A benevolence you certainly doubt by this studied eulogium.

Har. I might, did I not know it well.—In short, my love, I have taken the strangest step this morning—

Miss M. What step, for heaven's sake?

Har. In regard to a lady.

Miss M. Not another wife, I hope?

Har. No, only a mistress.

Miss M. Oh, a trifle, a trifle!

Capt. H. You may laugh, madam, but I am serious. In plain English, Woodville has a mistress he dotes on so madly, as even to intend marrying her. Imagining her, like most of her stamp, only an artful interested creature, I paid her a visit as a stranger, with an offer which must have unveiled her heart had it been base; but I found her, on the contrary, a truly noble-minded girl, and far above her present situation, which she earnestly wishes to quit.—In short, my dear, I thought it prudent to part them; and, in your name, offered her an asylum.

Miss M. In my name! you amaze me, Mr. Harcourt! Would you associate your wife with a kept mistress? bring such an acquisition into the house of lord Glenmore, and deprive Woodville of, perhaps, his only reason for not interfering with us?—Do you think I credit this sudden acquaintance?

Capt. H. I deceived myself, I find; I thought you above such low suspicion—that you could make distinctions.

Miss M. Yes, yes, I can make distinctions more clearly than you wished. You must excuse my interference in this affair, sir; and let me hint to you, that your own will do as little credit to your heart as to your understanding.

Capt. H. Mighty well, madam! go on. Settle this with respect to yourself, but do not be concerned about me; for in one word, if you cannot resolve on protecting this poor unfortunate, I will.

Miss M. That must not be; yet his warmth alarms me. [*Aside*] Nay but, my dear, think deliberately!—Supposing her all you say, the world judges by actions, not thoughts, and will bury her merit in her situation.

Capt. H. It is that cruel argument perpetuates error in so many of your frail sex.—Be the first to rise above it. That you are in lord Glenmore's house, will be your justification, both to the world and himself; for what but a generous motive can actuate you? In my eyes, my dear Sophia, virtue never looks so lovely as when she stretches out her hand to the fallen!

Miss M. Oh, Harcourt! I am ashamed of my suspicion; I ought to have known all the candour and generosity of your heart, and received in a moment the unhappy woman it patronised; yet, at this crisis in our own affairs, to run the chance of further exasperating my benefactor—

Capt. H. I am not to learn that friendship and love have been mere masks to fraud and folly in the great world. No one would blame me, were I to suffer Woodville to ruin himself, as the shortest way of fixing my own fortune, and obtaining my lord's approbation

of your choice. But I know not how it happened, that when a mere boy, I took it into my head, truth was as much to the purpose as lying; and as I never got into more scrapes than others, why I still pursue my system, and prefer honour to art. Then, if we fail, we have something better to console us than a pond or pistol; and if we succeed, what is there wanting to our happiness?

Miss M. And how do you mean to manage her escape?

Capt. H. That, my dearest, is the difficulty. I found she had seen you, and therefore was obliged to satisfy her of my honour, by assuring her you would call for her in person.

Miss M. Very well; we must carefully watch our opportunity. You dine here. The word of command you are accustomed to obey, but you must now become obedient to the look; for you know I have my difficulties, however strong my desire of obliging you.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT THE THIRD.



SCENE I. *The Hall.*

Enter VANE, looking about.

Vane. Hey-day! sure his old-fashioned lordship has not employed two of us on one errand!—An old man has been hovering about madam's house, and has followed me here, without my knowing what to make of him. However, ears befriend me! [*Retires, listening.*]

Enter GOVERNOR HARCOURT, followed by his black Servants soon after.

Gov. H. Here, Anthony, Pompey, Cæsar! you dogs! be ready to attend my lord and me on a little expedition.—No, no flambeaus, boobies! the chaste miss Diana will surely take a spiteful pleasure in lighting us to catch another kind of miss.—And, do ye hear? not one syllable of the when, where, or how, except you intend to dangle on one string, like a bunch of black grapes. [*Talks to them apart.*]

Enter GREY.

Grey. It is here, I am at length informed, the father of this abandoned seducer resides.—Yet, what redress can poverty hope from pride?—Surely, however, for his own sake, he will assist me in regaining the poor girl, and afterwards prevent the wretch from pursuing her!—There, I suppose, he is.—My lord!

Gov. H. Well, old Sturdy! what do you want with my lord? *[Turns short upon him.]*

Grey. Meroiful heaven! the father of Cecilia!

Vane. Hey! indeed!

Grey. Oh! how my heart misgives me! Perhaps this base Woodville, her very brother—

Gov. H. What, is the old man ill?—Sure I know this honest—it is not—yet it is—Grey?

Grey. The same indeed, my lord.

Gov. H. No my lord to me, man; my name is Harcourt.

Grey. Blessed be heaven for that, however!

Gov. H. Be not righteous overmuch; for that my name is Harcourt I do not reckon among the first favours of heaven.—But, ha, ha, ha! perhaps you thought I had no name at all by this time?—Faith, I put a pretty trick upon—Well, well, well!—You may retire till my lord is ready. *[To the Blacks, who go off]* I am a riddle, honest Grey! but now I am come to expound myself, and make thy fortune into the bargain. It is many a long day since I saw old England. But at last I am come home with a light heart and a heavy purse, design to fetch up my Cicely, give her and my money to the honestest fellow I can find, and grow old amid a rosy race of Britons, springing from a stem reared after my own fashion. There's news for you, my honest friend!

Grey. Alas! how little will he think I deserve his favour when he hears my account of her! And how can I shock a parent, with what too severely shocks even myself?

[Aside.]

Gov. H. What, silent, man! ha, ha, ha!—I can't but laugh to think how foolish you looked at the second year's end, when no allowance came: but that was my own contrivance; all done on purpose, my good old soul! and now it will come in a lump; there's the whole difference.—Well, and so my dame made her a pattern of housewifery, hey?—'Od! I don't intend to touch another pickle or preserve that is not of my little Cicely's own doing; and I'll build her a dairy, with every bowl and churn of silver!—Zounds, it shall be a finer sight than the Tower of London! and we'll set up dame Deborah's statue before it, like queen Anne's in St. Paul's Church-yard.—But why doesn't enjoy this discovery, man? Art afraid I shall take her from thee? Oh, never think of that; for thou shalt bless every pie she makes; ay, and taste it afterwards, old Pudding-sleeves!

Grey. Ah, sir!

[Sighs.]

Gov. H. Hey! Zounds! what dost mean? Sure my Cicely isn't dead?

Grey. No, not dead, sir.

Gov. H. She's very near it then, I suppose?

Grey. No, sir.

Gov. H. No, sir? Then what the devil do you mean, by alarming me thus with your "No, sirs," after all?

Grey. Alas! is there no greater evil?

Gov. H. None that I know of; but your whole fraternity are not more like ravens in colour than note.—Come, let us know what this mighty evil is.

Grey. For years did she increase in goodness as in beauty; the charm of every young heart, and the sole comfort of those old ones, to whom heaven and man seemed to have consigned her for ever.

Gov. H. Well, well, I had a little bird told me all this.

Grey. About a twelvemonth ago, during a little absence of mine, a young man of fashion introduced himself into my house; and my wife being void of suspicion, and the dear girl uninstructed in the ways of this bad world——

Gov. H. The dog betrayed her!—And is this your care, you old—and that ignoramus, your wife?—Zounds! I am in such a fury! I want to know no more of her infamous conduct.—'Od! I am strangely tempted to have you strangled this moment, as a just reward for your negligence; and so bury the secret with you.

Grey. It is as effectually buried already, sir. I love the dear unhappy girl too well ever to tell her heaven gave her to such a father.

Gov. H. Yes, yes, you are better suited to the—I hope she pays for this severely!—You make her stand in a white sheet, to be pointed at by the whole village every Sunday, to be sure?

Grey. Alas, sir! she put it out of my power even to forgive her.

Gov. H. Forgive her! forgive her, truly!

Grey. By flying immediately from her only friend.—Infirm and poor, I struggled with the joint evils till now; when, having collected enough to support me, I walked up in search of her. It was only yesterday I discovered her in a splendid coach, which I traced to her house.

Gov. H. A house? I shall run mad entirely!—A coach? Why, dare the little brazen-face pretend to elegance, when I took such pains to quench every spark of gentility in her?

Grey. In the neighbourhood I discovered the name of her seducer; and in seeking him, met with you.—Moderate your passion, sir.—Reflect! When age is frail, what can we expect in youth?—Shall man desert humanity?

Gov. H. So, so, so! Now I am to be tortured with your preaching.—I renounce the unworthy little slut. I have no friend—no daughter—no any thing.—'Od! I would sooner build an hospital for idiots, like Swift, and endow it with all my fortune, than bestow it on one who thus perverts reason.—Harkye, sir: forget the way to this house—forget you ever saw my face!—Would I had never seen yours!—For if you dare to send her whining to me, I'll torment you with every plague

power, wealth, law, or even lawyers, can set in motion. By heaven, I abjure the audacious little wretch for ever! and will sooner return to India, and bury my gold with those from whom it was taken, than bestow a single shilling on her, when she loses her coach and her house.

Grey. [*Contemptuously*] And I will sooner want a shilling, than suffer her to waste her youth in a state which will render her age an insupportable burden. Fear not, sir, ever seeing her or me again; for the bosom which reared, will joyfully receive her, nor further embitter her remaining days with the knowledge she was born the equal of her undoer, and deprived herself of all those blessings heaven only hid, never denied her. [*Exit.*]

Gov. H. Who would have a daughter? Zounds! I am as hot as if I was in the black hole at Calcutta! If miss had only married a lout, from ignorance of her birth, I could have forgiven it; but her puppy being of fashion, the papers will get hold of it, and I shall be paragraphed into purgatory. Fools can turn wits on these occasions; and, "A certain governor and his daughter," will set the grinners in motion from Piccadilly to Aldgate. This insolent old fellow too! I need not wonder where she got her courage: not but I like his spirit. 'Od, I like it much; it proves his innocence. What the devil did I drive him away for? Here, dogs, run after that old man in black, and order him to return to me this moment.

Enter LORD GLENMORE.

Lord G. And now, brother, I am ready for you.

Gov. H. Yes; and now, brother, I have something else to mind; and my servants moreover— [*Exit.*]

Lord G. What new whim can this troublesome mortal have taken into his head? [*A rapping at the Door*] I am not at home, remember. I have disposed of Woodville for a few hours upon pretence of business in the city, which will give me time to prosecute my scheme upon his lady.

Enter Miss MORTIMER, with CECILIA, in Mourning.

Miss M. Nay, as to that circumstance—Bless me, here's my lord! [*Apart.*

Cecil. My lord! Good heavens, I shall sink into the earth! [*Apart.*

Miss M. He can never guess at you: recover, my dear creature! [*Apart.*

Lord G. Is the lady indisposed, miss Mortimer?

Miss M. Yes, my lord; that is, no—I don't know what I am saying. She has been ill lately, and riding has a little overcome her, that's all.—Struggle to keep up, for heaven's sake and your own.

[*Apart to Cecilia.*

Cecil. Impossible!

[*Lord Glenmore draws a Hall Chair, in which she faints.*

Lord G. Warner! drops and water, in a moment. How beautiful she is! her features are exquisitely fine.

Miss M. They are thought so, my lord.

Lord G. Her pulse returns; she revives.

Cecil. I beg your pardon, madam! My lord too! I am shocked to have occasioned so much trouble.

Miss M. Absurd to apologise for the infirmity of nature: my lord, I do assure you, was quite anxious—

Lord G. The man must surely have lost every sense who can see this lady, even when deprived of hers, without emotion: but to me the languor of illness had ever something peculiarly interesting.—I wonder who this elegant creature is! her hand seems to tremble strangely. [*Aside.*

Cecil. Oh, madam!—

Miss M. Silence and recollection alone can secure you from suspicion; I confess I relied on his absence.

[*Apart to Cecilia.*

Re-enter GOVERNOR HARCOURT.

Gov. H. He won't return, hey? 'Od, I like the old Cambrian the better for it. I have fired his Welsh blood finely. Why, what a blockhead was I, not to go after him myself! Methinks I should like to know

miss when I meet her in her coach too. Um! did he not tell me something of tracing the seducer into this house? [*Stands in amazement a Moment, then Whistles*] Woodville's mistress, by every thing contrary! 'Od, I shall seize the gipsy with redoubled satisfaction! But I must keep my own counsel, or my old beau of a brother will roast me to death on my system of education, Hey! who has he got there? [*Cecilia rises*] A pretty lass, faith! Ah, there is the very thing I admire! there is gentility, without the fantastical flourishes of fashion! just the very air I hoped my minx would have had.

[*Lord Glenmore, having led off Cecilia, returns.*]

Lord G. I don't know how, but my inclination to this business is over. I think I'll let the matter alone at present.

Gov. H. The devil you will! why, by to-morrow, Woodville may have married her.

Lord G. D'ye think so? well then, let's go.

Gov. H. And what d'ye intend to do with her, pray?

Lord G. I won't trust this weatherecock till all is safe. [*Aside*] I care not what becomes of her, so she is out of my way: send her to Bridewell perhaps.

Gov. H. To Bridewell, truly? No, that you shan't, neither. Bridewell, quotha! why, who knows but the fault may be all that young Rakehell, your son's?

Lord G. My son's, sir! let me tell you, I have not bred him in such a manner.

Gov. H. Oh, if breeding were any security—Zounds, I shall betray all by another word! [*Aside.*]

Lord G. What now can have changed you? But you are more inconstant than our climate. Did you ever know one minute what you should think the next? However, to satisfy your scruples, I intend to dispatch her to a nunnery; and if that don't please you, e'en take charge of her yourself. [*Excunt together.*]

Vane. [*Comes forward*] Ha, ha, ha! why this would make a comedy! And so, of all birds in the air, his dignified lordship has pitched on me for the husband of the governor's daughter and his own niece! Well, if I can but go through with this, it will be admira-

ble! Thanked by one for making my fortune, and safe from the anger of all.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr. Woodville, sir, is just gone into the house you bade me watch. [Exit,

Vane. The devil he is! why then I must consign my intended to him for one night more, and persuade my lord to delay our seizure till morning; for, to meet with him, would certainly produce an agreement of all parties, and a marriage which would never enrol my name in the family pedigree, or governor's will. [Exit.

SCENE II. CECILIA'S Dressing-room. Candles burning, and her Clothes scattered.

Enter WOODVILLE.

Wood. Thanks to that dear lawyer's lucky absence, I have a few happy hours, my love, to spend with thee. [Looks at her Clothes] Already retired? sure I have not left my key in the garden gate: no, here it is. [Rings the Bell, and takes off his Sword; then throws himself into a Chair] Nobody answer! I don't understand this. Perhaps I shall disturb her: I'll steal into her chamber. [Goes off, and presently returns disordered] Not there! her clothes too, the same she had on last! Oh, my heart misgives me! But where are all the servants? [Rings very violently] Bridget! Robert! Jacob!

Re-enter BRIDGET, with her Hat on.

Bridget, what's become of your lady?

Brid. Really, sir, I can't say; don't you know?

Wood. If I did I shouldn't have asked you.

Brid. [After a little Pause] Why sure, sir, my lady has not run away; and yet something runs in my head as if she had. I thought that spark came for no good to-day.

Wood. What spark, girl?

Brid. Why, just after you went away comes a young

man, a monstrous genteel one, and very handsome too, I must needs say; with fine dark eyes, and a fresh colour.

Wood. Damn his colour! tell me his business.

Brid. So he axed for my lady, and would not tell me what he wanted: I came with her however; but she no sooner set eyes on him than she sent me out; which argufied no good, you'll say; and before I could possibly come back, though I ran as fast as ever my legs could carry me, he was gone, and she writing, and crying for dear life; but that was no news, so I did not mind it: and when she gave me leave to go to the play, thought no more harm than the child unborn.

Wood. It must be a scheme beyond all doubt, and I am the dupe of a dissembling, ungrateful—Oh, Cecilia!

[*Throws himself in a Chair.*]

Brid. [*Softening her Voice, and setting her Dress*] If I was as you, sir, I would not fret about her; there is not a lady in the land would slight a gentleman so handsome and sweet tempered: I scorn to flatter, for my part. Inferials mustn't direct their betters; but had I been in my lady's place, a king upon his throne would not have tempted me. Handsome him that handsome does, say I; and I am sure you did handsome by her; for if she could have eat gold, she might have had it.—He might take some notice truly.

[*Aside.*]

Wood. Where was she writing?

[*Starting up.*]

Brid. In the little drawing-room, sir. [*Exit Woodville*] This ridiculous love turns people's brains, I think. I am sure I said enough to open his eyes: but may be I don't look so handsome, because I am not so fine. Hey! a thought strikes me: my lady is gone, that's plain; back she will not come is as plain. [*Gathers together Cecilia's elegant Clothes*] I'll put on these, and he'll think she gave 'em to me: then he may find out I am as pretty as she; if not—he and I are of very different opinions.

[*Exit.*]

Re-enter WOODVILLE, more disordered.

Wood. Cruel, ungrateful, barbarous girl! to forsake me in the very moment I was resolving to sacrifice every thing to her! But 'tis just: first dupes to the arts of man, the pupil soon knows how to foil him at his own weapons. Perhaps the discovery is fortunate. In a short time I must have borne the whole disgrace of her ill conduct, and my father's resentment had the bitterest aggravation. But is she indeed gone? and will continual to-morrows come, without one hope to render them welcome?

Enter JACOB.

Villain! where's your lady?

Jacob. 'Las a deazy, how can I tell, zur?

Wood. Where are all your fellows?

Jacob. Abroad, making haliday.

Wood. When did you go out? who gave you leave?

Jacob. My leady, her own self; and I'll tell you how 'tware. Arter dinner I geed her a noate; and when zhe had red un, she axed me if zo be as how I had ever zeed the lions? Zoa I told her noa; nor no mour I never did. Zoa zhe geed me half a crown, and bid me goa and make myself happy. I thought it ware desperate koind of her; zoa I went and zeed the huge cre-turs; and arter, only stopp'd a bit to peap at the moniment, and hay my fortin tuold by conj'rer in the Old Bailey; and aw zaid——

Wood. What the devil does it signify to me what he said? Harkye, sir, I see in your face you know more of your mistress.

Jacob. Dang it then my feace do lye hugely.

Wood. Tell me the whole truth, villain! or I'll stab you to the heart this instant. [*Draws his Sword.*]

Jacob. [*Kneels*] I wull, zur, indeed I wull; doan't ye terrify me zoa! I do forget every thing in the whole world.

Wood. Be sincere, and depend upon my rewarding you.

Jacob. Why, I wish I meay die this maument, if

conj'rer did not zey I should lose my pleast! nay, aw do verily think aw zaid something o'my being put in fear o'my loife. Loard knaws, I little thought how zoon his words would come to pass.

Wood. Will you dally?

Jacob. Zoa, as I zaid, zur, when I com'd huome again, I found all the duors aupen, and not a zoul to be zeed.

Wood. This fellow can never mean to impose on me, and I must think it a planned affair. [*Aside*] While I was in the country, Jacob, did your mistress see much company?

Jacob. Cuompany; noa, not to speak an—not gentlewomen.

Wood. Gentlewomen, blockhead! why had she any male visitors?

Jacob. Anan!

Wood. I must brain thee at last, booby! Did any men come to see her then?

Jacob. Oh yes, zur, yes—two gentlemen com'd almost every deay.

Wood. How? two gentlemen! I shall run distracted! Young and handsome?

Jacob. Not auver young, zur, nor auver handsome; but drest muortal foine.

Wood. So they came almost ev'ry day? Very pretty indeed, miss Cecilia! Was you never called up while they staid? Did they come together, or alone?

Jacob. Aloane.

Wood. I thought as much; yes, I thought as much. But were you never called up, Jacob?

Jacob. Yes, zur, when one aw um ware here one deay, I ware caal'd up for something or other.

Wood. Well! why don't you go on? I am on the rack!

Jacob. Don't ye look so muortal angry, then!

Wood. Well, well, I won't, my good fellow! There's money for thy honesty.

Jacob. Well; there aw ware—

Wood. Speak out freely, you can tell me nothing

worse than I imagine; you won't shock me in the least; not at all.

Jacob. Well; theare aw ware pleaying on that theare music-thing like a coffin, and madam ware a zinging to un like any blackbird.

Wood. A music master! Is that all, booby?

[Pushes him down.]

Jacob. Yes; but t'other, zur—

Wood. Ay, I had forgot; what of him, good Jacob? what of him?

Jacob. I ware never caalled up while aw steay'd; zoa (I can't but zeay I had a curiosity to knaw what brought he here) one deay I peaped through the keay-hoole, and zeed un—*[Titters]*—I shall ne'er forgeat.

Wood. Tell me this instant, or I shall burst with rage and suspense.

Jacob. Screaping on a leetle viddle, no bigger than my hond; while madam ware a huolding out her quoats, and danzing all round the room, zoa.

[Mimicks a Minuet awkwardly.]

Wood. Why, I believe the impudent bumpkin dares to jest with my misery! and yet I have no other avenue; for the rest I fear are knaves, and he seems only a fool. *[Aside]* And are these all that came, Jacob?

Jacob. Noa, thare ware one moare, zur; a leetle mon in a black quoa; but aw only cuom'd now and tan.

Wood. A disguise, no doubt! Yes, yes, they were artful enough!

[Aside.]

Jacob. And zoa, arter he'd done wi' my leady, aw did zhat hiz zelf up wi' Bridget; and zoa I ax'd her all about un, and zhe zaid az how aw coom'd to teeach madam to turn themmin great round balls, all bleue, and red, and yaller, that do stond by the books, and larned zhe to wroite.

Wood. Yes, yes, Mrs. Bridget was in all her secrets, I don't doubt. If that fellow in black comes here again, keep him, if you value your life, and send for

me. I knew not what to do or think, and must renew my search, though hopeless of success. *[Exit.]*

Jacob. Dang it! but he's in a desperate teaking! Rabbit me, but I ware muortally afeard aw un too, for aw flourish'd hiz zword az yeazy az I could a cudgel! I do think conjurer moight as well ha' tould me madam would ha' run away, while aw ware about it, and then I moight ha' run'd away first. *[Exit.]*

Enter GREY.

Grey. At length I have gained entrance into this house of shame, which now, alas! contains my darling Cecilia; plunged in vice, and lost to every sentiment, I spent so many anxious years in implanting. This does not seem to be the abode of pleasure, nor have I met a single being.

Enter WOODVILLE behind, sees GREY, and drawing his Sword, flies at and seizes him.

Wood. Ha! a man! and in black as Jacob said. Villain, this moment is your last.

Grey. *[Turning suddenly upon him]* Yes, young seducer, add to the daughter's ruin the father's murder! Stab my heart, as you already have my happiness!

Wood. Alas! was this her visitor? I dare not speak to him!

Grey. Embosomed by affluence, exalted by title, peace still shall be far from thy heart; for thou, with the worst kind of avarice, hast, by specious pretences, wrested from poverty its last dear possession—virtue.

Wood. Pierced to the soul as I am by your reproaches, I dare appeal to Cecilia herself for a testimony of my contrition! How shall I convince you?

Grey. Hardly by a life of repentance. But I debase myself to exchange a word with you. Give me back my Cecilia! Ruined as she is, I yet would recover her! Give her back then to a father you first taught her to fear, and an habitation too humble for any but the good to be happy in.

Wood. Alas, sir! can you trifle with my misery? Do you give her back to the wretch who cannot survive her loss! Let me owe her hand to your bounty, though her heart to her own! Did you know what this elopement of hers has cost me——

Grey. Oh! most accomplished villain! but think not to dupe me too!

Wood. Who but you can have robbed me of her since morning?

Grey. Shallow artifice!

Wood. Hear me, sir! and even believe me, when I solemnly swear I have deeply repented my crime, and offered her all the reparation in my power; but since then——

Grey. What since then?

Wood. Either by your means or some other, she has fled!

Grey. Impossible!

Wood. 'Tis too true, by heaven!

Grey. Perhaps while you are thus ingeniously deluding me, she indeed flies. Study some other deception, while I examine the whole house, for nothing else can convince me. [Exit.]

Wood. Surely this injured venerable man was sent by heaven to complete my misfortunes! My passions subside, but only into a vague horror and despondency, even more dreadful! If with rash hand she has shortened her days, what remain of mine will be, indeed, all her father predicts! *[Walks by the Toilette]* Ha, a letter!

Re-enter GREY.

Grey. A total loneliness in the house!

Wood. Now, sir, be convinced. I have just found a letter from her.

Grey. This cannot be the invention of a moment. *[Aside]* Let me read it; it is indeed her hand. *[Opens and reads it]* Receive this as my last farewell. Providence has unexpectedly sent me a friend, whose protection I dare accept; and time may perhaps subdue a passion which seems interwoven with my being. Forget

me, I entreat ; and seek that happiness with another, I can never hope to bestow or partake. Consoled only by reflecting, that the grief my error occasions, is inferior to that I should have felt, had I, by an ungenerous use of my power, made you, in turn, my victim. Once more, adieu ! All search will certainly be fruitless.— P. S. In the cabinet you will find your valuable presents ; and the key is in a dressing-box. [Woodville snatches the Letter, and bursts into Tears] Cecilia ! I may say, with tears of joy, thou art indeed my daughter ! more dear, if possible, than ever ! A daughter monarchs might contend for, though thy weak father abjures thee ! May the friend you have found have a heart but like your own ! For you, young man ! but I leave you to your anguish ; the loss of such a woman is a sufficient punishment.

Wood. Stay, sir ! [*Rises*] by your holy profession, I I conjure you, stay ! Plunge me not into total despair ! Though without a clue to her asylum, I would fain believe my heart will lead me to it ; and let me then hope you will bestow her on me.

Grey. There is a something in your manner, young gentleman, that affects me. I have been young, wild, and extravagant myself ; and what is more strange, have not forgot I was so : my own experience proves reformation possible ; act up to her, and atone your error.

Wood. I will endeavour it, sir ! and oh, could those who yet but waver, know what has passed in my heart during the last hour, who would dare to deviate ?

[*Exeunt,*

ACT THE FOURTH.



SCENE I. CECILIA's House.

BRIDGET *discovered, dressed in CECILIA's Clothes, mixed with every thing vulgar and tawdry.*

Brid. So—I am ready against our gentleman comes. Dence on him to run away last night, the moment I was dressed, and with an inferial fellow too! Lard, how can people of quality demean themselves by keeping company with inferials? However, one thing I am sure of, he's too much on the fidgets to stay long away from our house; and in the mean while I can entertain myself extremely well. *[Sits down to the Toilette.]*

Jacob. *[Without]* I tell ye, my leady's not at huome.

Gov. H. *[Without]* I tell you, I won't take your word for it; so come, my lord, and see.

Brid. Hey-day, my lord! What's the news now, I wonder?

*Enter LORD GLENMORE and GOVERNOR HARCOURT ;
both stop short.*

Gov. H. Oh, I thought madam had learned enough of the ton to lie by proxy!

Brid. Dear heart! I am all of a twitteration!

Lord G. The vulgarity of the wench is astonishing!

[Apart.

Gov. H. Um, why, a little gawky or so, there's no denying it. Here's a pretty discovery, now, after all my projects! Thank fortune, the secret is yet my own, though.

[Aside.

Lord G. *[Advancing to her]* I ought to beg your excuse, madam, for so abrupt an intrusion; but the opportunity, and so fair a temptation, will, I flatter myself, be a sufficient apology.

Brid. He takes me for my lady, that's a sure thing! oh, this is charming! *[Aside]* You need not make no 'pologys, my lord; inferials never knows how to suspect people of quality; but I understands good breeding better.

Lord G. Why, what a barn-door mawkin it is! *[Aside]* Your politeness, madam, can only be equalled by your beauty!

Brid. Dear heart, my lord, you flatter me! Won't you please to sit?

[Waits affectedly till they consent to seat themselves.

Lord G. Surely by using my title, she knows me!

[Apart.

Gov. H. Zounds! I have a great mind to make her know me! 'Od! I shall never be able to contain! *[Apart.*

Lord G. I was afraid, madam, I should prove an unwelcome guest—but beauty like yours—

Brid. Does your lordship think I so very handsome then? Lord, how lucky was my dressing myself!

[Aside.

Lord G. Affected idiot! *[Aside]* I was afraid, madam, too of meeting Woodville here. I know not what to say to her.

[Aside.

Brid. He has not been here this morning; but, if he had, he knows better than to ax arter my company, I do assure you, my—lordship.

Lord G. I have been told he intends marrying you; what a pity to monopolize such merit!

Brid. If he has any such kind intention, 'tis more than I knows of, I assure you.

Lord G. His keeping that wise resolution from you, is some little comfort however. [*Aside.*]

Brid. But I promise ye, I shall make a rare person of quality; for I loves cards, coaches, dancing, and dress, to my very heart—nothing in the world better—but blindman's-buff. I had some thoughts of taking a trip to Sadler's Wells or Fox Hall, but they don't begin till five o'clock.

Gov. H. Ha, ha! though she can hardly spell out the ten commandments, she could break every one with as much ease and impudence as if she had been bred in the circle of St. James's. [*Aside.*]

Lord G. But, madam——

Brid. My lord!

Lord G. You know, allowing Woodville willing to marry you, it is not in his power while his father lives, without forfeiting his fortune; the value of which you doubtless understand?

Brid. Oh, yes, yes, for sartain, my lord.

Lord G. Who knows too how far an incensed parent may carry his resentment? He might find means to entrap and punish you.

Brid. Ha, ha, ha! he entrap me! that would be a good jest! No, no, I have more of the lady of quality than to be so easily caught.

Gov. H. [*Mimicking*] He, he, he! that is the only particular in which you have nothing at all of the lady of quality.

Lord G. With me you may share a higher rank and larger fortune without those fears I am of an age——

Brid. Yes, one may see that without being a conjurer. [*Aside*] Why, will you marry me, my lord?

Lord G. Convince me that you don't love this

Woodville, and I know not how far my passion may carry me.

Brid. Love him! Do you think I knows no more of high life than that comes to? To be sure, he is a sweet pretty man, and all that—but as to love, I loves nobody half so well as myself!

Lord G. Upon my soul I believe you, and wish he had the whole benefit of the declaration: Her ingratitude is as shocking as her ignorance, and Bridewell too gentle a punishment. [*Apart to Gov. H.*

Gov. H. Then build a Bridewell large enough to contain the whole sex; for the only difference between her and the rest is—this country mawkin tells what the town-bred misses conceal. [*Apart.*

Lord G. Why, governor, you are as testy as if you had the care of her education. [*Apart.*

Gov. H. I the care? Zounds, what I say is merely from friendship to your lordship. I hate to see you deceive yourself. [*Apart*] Surely he can never suspect!

[*Aside.* Bridget is employed in cramming Trinkets from the Dressing-table into her Pockets.

Brid. Now I am ready to go, my lord.

Gov. H. [*Roughly snatching her other Hand*] To where you little dream of, you vain, affected, presuming, ignorant baggage.

Brid. Hey-day! my lord!

Lord G. Appeal not to me, base woman! Know I am the father of that poor dupe, Woodville.

Brid. Dear heart! be ye indeed? what will become of me then?

Lord G. And as a moderate punishment for your hypocrisy, ambition, and ingratitude, sentence you to be shut up for life in a monastery.

Brid. O Lord! among monsters!

Gov. H. No, ignoramus! No, among nuns; though they are but monsters in human nature either.

Brid. What, where they'll cut off my hair, and make me wear sackcloth next my skin?

Gov. H. Yes, if they leave you any skin at all.

Brid. Oh dear, dear, dear! [*Sobs and groans*] Upon

my bended knees, I do beg you won't send me there! Why, I shall go mallancholly; I shall make away with myself for sartain, and my ghost will appear to you all in white.

Gov. H. All in black, I rather think; for the devil a speck of white is there in your whole composition.

Lord G. Your conduct, wretch, justifies a severer sentence. To seduce him from his duty was crime enough.

Brid. Who, I seduce him? I did not, my lord; indeed I did not.

Lord G. Have you not owned——

Brid. No, indeed, no; that I wished to take my lady's place, I believe I did own.

Gov. H. Ha, ha, ha! Your lady! Ha, ha, ha!

Lord G. Shallow subterfuge!

Enter VANE, with Slaves.

Vane, is all ready?—Seize this woman, and observe my orders.

Brid. Ah, dear heart! I shall die away, if the blacks do but touch me.—Indeed you do mistake; I be no lady; I be only Bridget.

Gov. H. I would give ten thousand pounds that you were only Bridget, you artful puss! Take her away, however; and let us try how miss likes riding out in her own coach.

[Vane and the Slaves seize her; she screams out and catches Lord Glenmore's Coat, falling on her Knees.]

Enter JACOB.

Jacob. Why, what a dickens be ye all at here? Zoa, what's my leady theare?

Lord G. See there now! Oh, the artful Jezebel!

Brid. Oh, Jacob! why, don't ye see I am Bridget?—Pray satisfy my lord here.

Jacob. Why, be ye Bridget?—Never trust me else!

Gov. H. Here's a fool of t'other sex now can hardly take a hint though so plainly given him!—Thanks to the natural difference; for art is nature in woman.

[Lord Glenmore draws him aside.]

Jacob. Auh, Bridget, Bridget! where didst thee get theesum foin claws?—Noa, noa, as theest brew'd, thee meay'st beake.

Brid. Oh, do you take pity on me! Why, they be going to carry me to some outlandish place, and make a nunnery of me!

Jacob. A nunnery? what's that? any thing Cristin? Well, if I do spake to um; will ye ha'e me?

Brid. O, yes, yes, yes!

Lord G. Brother, I shall leave you to the completion of this affair; I am sick to the soul of the gawky.

[Exit.

Gov. H. Yes, yes, I don't doubt it, I don't doubt it.—Will you take her or no? [To Vane] I shall never be able to stifle my agitation, and burst with rage if I show it.

Jacob. Why, sure, sure, ye won't carr' away our Bridget?

Vane. Ha, ha, ha!

Gov. H. Oh, she has beat her meaning into thy thick skull at last!—Pr'ythee keep thy blockhead out of my way, if thou mean'st to keep it on thy own shoulders.

Jacob. Why, be ye in earnest then? Dear heart alive! why, this is cousin Bridget!

Brid. Only send for Mr. Woodville.

Gov. H. Prettily devised again! Ha, ha, ha!—Dost think, my little dear, we have lived three times as long as your ladyship to learn a quarter as much?—Send for Mr. Woodville, hey?—No, no, you won't find us quite so simple.

Jacob. Oh, doan't ye, doan't ye carr' off zhe; or if ye wull, do pray take I.

Vane. Yes, you would be a choice piece of lumber, truly.

Gov. H. Drag her away this moment.

Brid. Oh dear, oh dear! to be hanged at last for another's crime is all that vexes me.

[They carry her off; Governor Harcourt follows.

SCENE II. MISS MORTIMER'S Apartment.

Enter CECILIA, and sits down to Embroidery.

Cecil. How fond, how weak, how ungrateful are our hearts! Mine still will presumptuously fancy this house its home, and ally itself to every one to whom Woodville is dear.

Enter LORD GLENMORE.

Oh heavens, my lord!—How unlucky!—If I go, he may find the captain with miss Mortimer. [*Aside.*

Lord G. You see, madam, you have only to retire, to engage us to pursue you even to rudeness.—But tell me, can it be your own choice to punish us so far as to prefer solitude to our society?

Cecil. I know myself too well, my lord, to receive distinctions of which I am unworthy; yet think not, therefore, I fail in respect.

Lord G. But is that charming bosom susceptible of nothing beyond respect? Why is it capable of inspiring a passion it cannot participate?

Cecil. Your goodness, my lord—my profound veneration will always attend you. But the more generously you are inclined to forget what is due to yourself, the more strongly it is impressed on my memory.

Lord G. Were what you say true, the bounties of nature atone amply to you for the parsimony of fortune; nor would your want of every other advantage lessen your merit, or my sense of it.

Cecil. Had he thought thus a few months since, how happy had I now been! [*Aside*] Your approbation at once flatters and serves me, by justifying miss Mortimer's protection of me.

Lord G. Her partiality for you does her more honour than it can ever do you advantage. But you must tell me how she gained first the happiness of knowing you.

Cecil. My—my lord, by a misfortune so touching—

Lord G. Nay, I would not distress you neither; yet I own, madam, I wish to make a proposal worth a

serious answer; but ought first to know why you affect a mystery? Tell me then, my dear, every incident of your life, and I will raise you to a title, I may without vanity say, many have aspired to!

Cecil. You oppress my very soul, my lord!—But, alas! unconquerable obstacles deprive me for ever of that title. Neither would I obtain it by alienating such a son from such a father.

Lord G. Put him entirely out of the question; the meanness of his conduct acquits me to myself. Do you know, madam, he has resolved to marry a creature of low birth, illiterate, vulgar, and impudent? And, to complete her perfections, she has been his mistress at least.

Cecil. Surely he knows, and purposely shocks me thus. *[Aside.]*

Lord G. But your integrity doesn't render you less amiable in my eyes; it greatly enhances every other merit. As to his wretch, I have her in my power, and shall make her dearly repent.

Cecil. Then I am lost indeed! *[Aside]* You have, my lord, though I know not how, discovered——

[Rises in confusion.]

Lord G. *[Rises, and takes Snuff, without looking at her]* Oh, nothing more easy, madam; I had him carefully traced to her house, and, during his absence, took servants and forced her away.

Cecil. That, however, cannot be me.—Every word seems to add to a mystery I dare not inquire into. *[Aside]* Deprived of the weak, the guilty, the miserable wretch you justly condemn, a little time will no doubt incline him to his duty.

Lord G. I will confess I resent his misconduct the more, as I ever treated him with friendship as well as tenderness: to presume to insult me, by introducing into a family like mine the creature of his pleasures; a wretch, only distinguished by his folly and her own infamy——But can you, who so powerfully plead the cause of another, be deaf to the sighs of a man who adores you, who offers you a rank——

Cecil. Be satisfied, my lord, with knowing I have all that esteem your merit claims, which influences me beyond every casual advantage.

Lord G. But, madam——

Cecil. Alas, my lord! [*Bursts into Tears*] Be silent, if possible, both pride and virtue. I have deserved, and will submit to it; yet surely the bitterness of this moment expiates all past offences. [*Exit.*]

Lord G. Amiable creature! what an amazing elegance of mind and person! Tears were her only answers to my questions, and blushes to my looks; yet these only heighten a curiosity they have softened into love. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III. WOODVILLE'S Apartment.

Enter WOODVILLE.

Wood. No intelligence of my Cecilia yet! Were I only assured of her safety, it would be some consolation.

Enter JACOB.

Jacob. Zur, zur! I do meake so bowld as to ax to spake to you.

Wood. Jacob, my honest fellow, the very sight of thee revives my hopes, and sets my heart in motion!—Well, what's the news?

Jacob. Zurprising news indeed, zur!—Loord! I thought I should never meat wi' ye; I cou'd to your lodgings twice, and ye warn't up.

Wood. Up! 'Sdeath, you ignorant booby! why didn't you order them to rouse me that moment?

Jacob. Loord, zur! why your gentlemen (as they do caal un) ware so terrable foine, I ware afeard of affronting un.

Wood. Plague on the stupidity of both, say I!—But what's all this to the purpose? The news! the news!

Jacob. Las-a-deazy! muortal bad news indeed!

Wood. You tedious blockhead! is your lady returned?

Jacob. Noa, zur. [*Shakes his Head very mournfully.*]

Wood. The horrid forebodings of my heart recur; yet surely she could not be so desperate!—Shocking as the suspense is, I more dread the certainty. [*Aside*] Speak, however, my good fellow! [*Jacob wipes his Eyes*] I shall ever value your sensibility. Tell me then the simple truth, whatever it may be.

Jacob. I wull, zur, I wull.—There has comed two foine gentlemen, wi' zwords by their zides, just for all the world like yourn.

Wood. Well, and what did these gentlemen say?

Jacob. Why, they went up stears, willy-nilly, and carr'd off—our Bridget. [*Bursts out a crying.*]

Wood. You impudent, ignorant clown! I'll give you cause for your tears. [*Shakes him.*]

Jacob. Loord! Loord! do ye ha' a little Cristin commiseration!—Well, if ever I do cuome nigh ye again, I do wish ye may break every buone in my zkin.

Wood. [*Walks about in a Rage*] To insult me with your own paltry love affairs!—These great and mighty gentlemen were only constables, I dare swear, and your fears converted their slaves to swords.

Jacob. Ay, but that an't the worst neither. I do verily think my turn wull cuome next—can't zleep in my bed for thinking on't, nor enjoy a meal's meat—zo, except you do bring your zword, and cuome and live in our houze, I wull gao out on't, that's a zure thing; for I had rather sceare craws at a graat a deay all my loife long, than 'bide there to be so terrifoid.

Wood. Sceare crawstruly! why, the craws will sceare you, ye hen-hearted puppy!—There, teake that, [*Gives him Money*] and guo home, or to the devil, so you never fall in my way again.

Jacob. Zome faulk that I do kuaw wull zee the black gentleman first, 'tis my belief; zoa I had best keep out o'his woy too. [*Exit.*]

Enter CAPTAIN HARCOURT.

Capt. H. Woodville, what's the matter? Why, you will raise the neighbourhood.

Re-enter JACOB.

Jacob. Here's a peaper housemaid do zend you, wi' her humble duty; but if zo be it do put you in another desperate teaking, I do huope ye wull zend for zhe to beat, and not I.—Loord! Loord! what wull becuome of me in this woide world of London! *[Exit.*

Capt. H. Ha, ha, ha! he is a choice fellow!

Wood. A heart oppressed with its own feelings fears every thing. I have hardly cou rage to open a letter without an address.

Capt. H. Come, come, give it me then.—Hey, what?—Confusion! Was ever any thing so unlucky?

[Attempts to tear it.

Wood. Ha! it is important then.

[Snatches it from him.

Capt. H. Why will you invent torments for yourself?—My own letter, by every thing careless!—Here's a stroke! *[Aside.*

Wood. *[Reads in a broken Voice and Manner]* Woodville on the brink of marriage—you will be disengaged—A nobleman—Damnation!—Heart and fortune at her feet.—I'll let his soul out there. Hell and furies! but I will find him, if money—Never will I close my eyes till—Oh, Cecilia!

[Throws himself into a Seat.

Capt. H. This is the most unforeseen—I know not what to say to him. *[Aside]* Pr'ythee, Woodville, do not sacrifice so many reasonable presumptions in her favour, to a paper that may be a forgery for aught you know.

Wood. Oh, Charles, that I could think so! but I have seen the villaiu's execrable hand somewhere! Did you never see the hand?

Har. Um, I can't but own I have.—What the devil shall I say to him? *[Aside.*

Re-enter GOVERNOR HARCOURT.

Gov. H. Woodville, my dear boy, I am come to have a little talk with thee. Charles, don't run away; you are in all your cousin's secrets.

Wood. What should possess this tiresome mortal to come here? [*Aside*] I should have waited on you in half an hour, sir.

Gov. H. Ay, and that's what I wanted to avoid. The more I talk to your father, Frank, the more I find him fixed on the match with his miss Mortimer: nay, he tells me he will have you married this very day.

Wood. That's mighty probable, in the humour I am in.

Gov. H. Ah, Frank, the girl I offer thee——

Wood. Is no more agreeable to me than her you despise.

Gov. H. How do you know that, peppercorn? how do you know that? 'Od, I could tell you——

Wood. And to tell you my full mind, sir, I had rather make myself miserable to gratify my father than any other man.

Gov. H. 'Od, thou art so obstinate, boy, I can't help loving thee.——I don't see why I am obliged to know his miss is my daughter: I have a great mind to own what we have done with her; and, if he will marry, o'en take care nobody hinders him; then trump up a farce about forgiving them; and yet it goes against my conscience to punish the puppy for life, though he has punished me pretty sufficiently, by the lord Harry.

[*Aside.*

Capt. H. I don't like this affair at all, and tremble for my Sophia, when I see this odd soul so inveterate against her.

[*Aside,*

Gov. H. Well, my lad, do you know I am as deep in all your secrets as your favourite valet de chambre?

[*To Woodville.*

Wood. I don't understand you, sir.

Gov. H. Pho, pho, pho! keep that face till I show thee one as solemn as my lord's. Why should not you please yourself, and marry your miss, instead of your father's?

Wood. *Capt. H.* Astonishing!

Gov. H. 'Od, if you turn out the honest fellow I take you for, I know a pretty round sum, an onion and a

black coat may one day or other entitle you to ; so never mind lord Gravity's resentment.

Wood. I act from better motives, sir, and were unworthy your wealth, could it tempt me to disobey the best of fathers.

Gov. H. Why then marry miss Mortimer, and oblige him ; take a back seat in your own coach, get a family of pale-faced brats, born with ostrich feathers on their heads, and hate away a long life with all due decorum. Zounds, here's a fellow more whimsical than—even myself. Yesterday you would have the puss, spite of every body ; but, you no sooner find it in your power to oblige your best friend, by humouring your inclinations, than, lo, you are taken with a most violent fit of duty and submission ! 'Od, you don't know what you have lost by it ! But, since you are bent on crossing me, I'll cross you, and once for all too. My secret shall henceforth be as impenetrable as the philosopher's stone. Ay, stare as you please, I'll give you more years than you have seen days to guess it in. [*Exit.*]

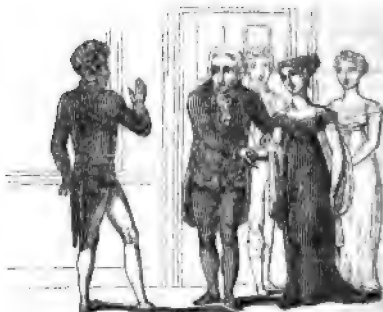
Capt. H. What this uncle of ours can mean is quite beyond my guess.

Wood. What signifies seeking to expound by reason actions in which it had no share ? his brain is indubitably touched. But Cecilia lies heavy on my heart, and excludes every other thought.

Capt. H. Time may explain the secret of that letter, which, I will lay my life, she despises : a woman who did not, would have kept it from your hands.

Wood. That's true, indeed ! If I wrong her, and this was but an insult, there is a noble sincerity in her own letter which sets suspicion at defiance. If he stumbled on one word of truth during this visit, the crisis of my fate approaches. Oh, wherever thou art, if the exalted being I will still hope my Cecilia, thou shalt know I have at least deserved thee ! [*Exeunt.*]

ACT THE FIFTH.



SCENE I.

A mean Room ; Boots, Bridles, &c. hanging all round.

BRIDGET discovered sitting very mournfully, her fine Clothes in great Disorder ; a Table by her, with a small Roll, a Glass of Water, an old dog's-eat'd Book, and a bit of a Looking-glass.

Brid. Dear heart ! dear heart ! what a miserable time have I passed ! and where I be to pass my whole life, my lord here only knows. I have not much stomach indeed ; neither have I much breakfast.

[Eats a bit of Bread, and bursts into Tears.]

Enter GOVERNOR HARCOURT.

Gov. H. Had I more sins to answer for than a college of Jesuits, I surely expiate them all, by going through a purgatory in this life beyond what they have invented for the other. This vulgar maux of mine haunts my imagination in every shape but that I hoped to see her in ; I dare hardly trust myself to speak to her. 'Od, I would not have the extirpation of the

whole female sex depend upon my casting vote while I am in this humour.

Brid. Mercy on me, here's that cross old gentleman again! What will become of me? [*Aside*] Do pray, strange sir, be so generous as to tell me what is next to be done with me?

Gov. H. Why, just whatever I please, you audacious baggage.—'Od, now I think on't, I have a great mind to try a few soft words, and dive into all the secrets of the little ignoramus. [*Aside*] Come, suppose I had a mind to grant you your freedom, how would you requite me?

Brid. Dear heart, why I'd love you for ever and ever.

Gov. H. Zounds, that's a favour I could very readily dispense with; and yet 'tis natural to the poor wench. Ah, if thou hadst been a good girl, thou hadst been a happy one. Harkye, miss! confess all your sins; that's the only way to escape, I promise you; and if you conceal the least, I'll—do—I don't know what I'll do to you.

Brid. I will, I will, sir, indeed, as I hope to be married.

Gov. H. Married, you slut! Bad as that is, it's too good for you.—Come, tell me all your adventures.—Describe the behaviour of the young villain who seduced you.—Where did you see him first?

Brid. Ugh, ugh—at church, sir.

Gov. H. At church, quotha! A pretty place to commence an intrigue in!—And how long was it before you came to this admirable agreement?

Brid. Um—why, Sunday was Midsummer-eve, and Sunday after was madam's wedding-day, and Monday was our fair, and—

Gov. H. Oh, curse your long histories!—And what then said Woodville?

Brid. Oh Lord, nothing at all; why, it warn't he.

Gov. H. No! Who, who, who? Tell me that, and quite distract me! [*Ready to burst with Passion.*]

Brid. Timothy Hobbs, squire's gardener.

Gov. H. An absolute clown! [*Walks about, half groaning with rage and disappointment*] Who, oh, who would be a father?—I could laugh—cry—die—with shame and anger!—Since the man who corrupted left her only one virtue, would he had deprived her of that too! Oh, that she had but skill enough to lie well!

Brid. Whether I can or no, I'll never speak truth again, that's a sure thing. What do I get by it, or any poor souls of the female kind? [*Aside.*

Gov. H. I am incapable of thinking.—Every plan, every resource thus overturned. I must be wiser than all the world; this fool's head of mine must take to teaching truly! as if I could eradicate the stamp of nature, or regulate the senses, by any thing but reason.—Don't pipe, haggage, to me! You all can do that, when too late. When I have considered whether I shall hang myself or not, I'll let you know whether I shall tuck you up along with me, you little wretch you! [*Exit.*

Brid. Well, sure I have at last guessed where I am shut up! It must be Bedlam; for the old gentleman is out of his mind, that's a sure thing.

Enter VANE.

Vane. Ha, ha, ha! my future father-in-law seems to have got a quietus of my intended; and, faith, so would any man who was not in love with a certain forty thousand. To be sure, in plain English, she is a glorious mawkin! [*Aside*] Well, madam, how are you pleased with your present mode of living?

Brid. Living, do you call it? I think 'tis only starving. Why, I shall eat my way through the walls very shortly.

Vane. Faith, miss, they use you but so so, that's the truth on't: and I must repeat, even to your face, what I said to my lord, that your youth, beauty, and accomplishments, deserve a better fate.

Brid. Dear heart! Bedlam, did I say I was in? Why, I never knew a more sensibler, genteeler, prettier sort of a man in my life. [*Aside*] I am sure, sir, if I was to

study seven years, I should never know what I have done to discommode them, not I.

Vane. O Lord, my dear! only what is done every day by half your sex without punishment; however, you are to suffer for all it seems. You see your fare for life! a dungeon, coarse rags, and the same handsome allowance of bread and water twice a day.

Brid. Oh, dear me! why I shall be anotomy in a week.

Vane. And an old black to guard you, more sulky and hideous than those in the Arabian Night's Entertainments.

Brid. Why, sure they will let you come and see me, sir? I shall certainly swoond away every time I look at that nasty old black.

Vane. This is the last time your dungeon (which your presence renders a palace to me) will ever be open to one visitor—unless—unless—I could contrive—but no, it would be my ruin: yet who wouldn't venture something for such a charming creature? you could endear even ruin. Tell me then what reward you would bestow on a man who ventured all to give you freedom?

Brid. Nay, I don't know; you're such a dear sweet soul, I shan't stand with you for a trifle.

Vane. Ahoy! miss will be as much too complying in a minute. [*Aside*] Well then, my dear! I must marry you, or you will still be in the power of your enemies.

Brid. Hey! what? do I hear rightly? marry me? Why, this will be the luckiest day's work I ever did! [*Aside*] Nay, sir, if you should be so generous, I hope I shall live to make you amends.

Vane. The only amends you can make me is by dying. [*Aside*] And now, my dear! I will own to you I have the license in my pocket; and my lord as eager as myself. Our chaplain will do us the favour with more expedition than he says grace before meat! Well done, Vane! 'egad, thy lucky star predominates!

[*Aside.* Takes her Arm.

Brid. Surely my looking up does end very comical.

[*Exeunt Arm in Arm.*

SCENE II. *The Drawing-room.*

Enter GOVERNOR HARCOURT, musing.

Gov. H. I have lived fifty-eight years, five months, and certain odd days, to find out I am a fool at last; but I will live as many more, before I add the discovery that I am a knave too.

Enter CAPTAIN HARCOURT.

Capt. H. What the devil can he be now hatching? mischief, I fear.

Gov. H. Dear fortune! let me escape this once undiscovered, and I compound for all the rest. Charles! the news of the house? for the politics of this family are employment for every individual in it.

Capt. H. Bella, horrida bella, sir! My lord is determined to bring his son's duty to an immediate test. Thanks to his friend's schemes and his mistress's beauty.
[*Aside,*

Gov. H. What poor malicious wretches are we by nature! Zounds, if I could not find in my heart to rejoice at thinking every one here will be as mortified and disappointed as a certain person that shall be nameless. So, so, here they come, faith, to argue the point in open court.

Enter LORD GLENMORE, followed by WOODVILLE.

Lord G. Without this proof of your obedience, all you can urge, sir, is ineffectual.

Wood. While obedience was possible I never swerved, my lord; but when you command me to make myself wretched, a superior duty cancels that: already bound by a voluntary, an everlasting vow, I cannot break it without offending heaven, nor keep it without offending you.

Gov. H. What's this? chopped about again! [*Aside.*

Wood. Did you once know the incomparable merits of my love, even your lordship's prejudices must give way to your reason.

Lord G. Mere dotage. Doesn't her conduct equally evince her folly and depravity?

Wood. Covered, as I ought to be, with confusion and remorse, I will own she was seduced and deceived.

Gov. H. Ah, poor boy! [*Aside*] One of the two was wofully deceived, sure enough.

Lord G. Oh, your conscience may be very easy on that account; it could not require much art to deceive such an idiot.

Gov. H. No, no, my lord! Why paint the devil blacker than he is? Not an idiot neither.

Wood. Sir, my father's freedom of speech I must endure; but yours——

Gov. H. You must endure too, young sir, or I shall bite my tongue off.

Wood. But, my lord! that dear unhappy girl is no longer a subject of debate. She evidently proves her merit by her flight.

Lord G. Would you make a virtue from not doing ill, when it is no longer in your power? Woodville! I was once weak enough to believe indulgence the surest way of obtaining your duty and esteem. My eyes are at last opened. Miss Mortimer is worthy a better husband; but you are hers, or no son of mine. I solemnly promised this to her dying father, and will acquit myself at all events.

Wood. Can you resolve to sacrifice me to a promise made before we could judge of each other? You never felt, sir, the compulsion you practise. Will you dissolve the first band of morality, and see your highly-estimated title end in me? for never will I on these terms continue it.

Lord G. I almost wish I never had continued it. [*Walks in Anger*] I am determined, Woodville! and nothing but miss Mortimer's refusal can break the match.

Wood. I shall not put that in her power, my lord. Permit me to tell you, no son was ever more sensible of a father's kindness; but if I can purchase its con-

tinnance only with my honour and my happiness, it would be too dearly bought.

Lord G. 'Tis well, sir.—I have listened to you sufficiently. Now hear me. Know, this worthless wretch you prefer to your duty, is in my power; nay, in this house.

Capt. H. The devil she is! How, in the name of ill-luck, should he find that out?—My fine scheme entirely blown up, by Jupiter! [*Aside.*

Wood. Why play thus upon me, my lord?—Her letter—

Lord G. What, has she wrote to you? That I was not aware of, nor indeed suspected she could write.

Gov. H. No, not so ignorant as that neither. I ordered she should write too!

Lord G. You ordered she should write? Let me tell you, sir, it was wronging my confidence.

Gov. H. No, I did not order she should write. I mean—I mean—Zounds! I don't know what I mean.

Wood. So it seems indeed; since, hardly half an hour ago, my uncle himself persuaded me to marry my love.

Gov. H. Here's a cursed affair now.

Lord G. Can this be possible? Let me tell you, governor, if, presuming upon your wealth, you play a double part in my family—

Gov. H. Zounds! nobody knows his own part in your family, that I see! and this fellow too to tease me, whom I loved above all in it. Why, I spoke entirely from regard to him. If since then I have discovered a bumpkin was beforehand with him in the possession of his miss—

Wood. If any one beside yourself, sir, durst tell such a falsehood, it would cost a life.

Gov. H. Yes, and if any one beside myself durst tell me such a truth, it would cost a soul perhaps. [*Exit.*

Capt. H. This is more unintelligible than all the rest.

Lord G. To end these altercations, upon yourself,

Woodville, shall depend the fortune of this wretch to whom you have been so gross a dupe as to justify the imputation of folly. Why, even without knowing me, she ridiculed your passion, and offered to leave you.

Wood. Impossible!

Lord G. Dare you disbelieve me, sir?—Nay, she shall be produced, and obliged to confess her arts; then blush and obey.—Here, Vane! governor! the keys! [*Exit. Woodville walks behind in great agitation.*]

Capt. H. Now could I find in my heart to make this story into a ballad, as a warning to all meddling puppies; and then hang myself, that it may conclude with a grace. Zounds, he must be endued with supernatural intelligence! Just when I was saying a thousand civil things to myself on my success, to have my mine sprung before my eyes by the enemy; and instead of serving my friend and myself, become a mere tool to old Gravity's revenge! Pshaw! however, we must make the best of a bad matter. [*Aside*] Woodville, what dost mean to do, man?

Wood. Let them produce my Cecilia, I will then seize and protect her to the last moment of my life.

Capt. H. And I will assist you to the last moment of mine.

Wood. My generous cousin! this is indeed friendship.

Capt. H. Not so very generous, if you knew all.

Re-enter LORD GLENMORE and GOVERNOR HARCOURT, with BRIDGET, holding a Handkerchief to her Eyes, followed by VANE; WOODVILLE flies and clasps her in his Arms, HARCOURT takes her Hand.

Wood. My love! my life! do I once again behold thee?—Fear nothing; you here are safe from all the world!—Will you not bless me with one look?

Brid. Oh, dear me!

[*Looks at Woodville and Captain Harcourt with ridiculous distress.*]

Lord G. I have put it out of your power to marry, sir, otherwise you may take her.

Wood. Take her? What poor farce is this?

Capt. H. Hey-day! more incomprehensibilities.

Vane. Now for the eclaircissement, since if the governor doesn't acknowledge her in his first rage and confusion, I may never be able to make him. [*Aside*] I humbly hope Mr. Woodville will pardon me, if, with her own consent and my lord's, I this morning married this young lady.

Gov. H. Zounds, you dog, what's that? You married her?—Why, how did you dare?—And you too, my lord! what the devil, did you consent to this?

Vane. Believe me, sir, I didn't then know she was your daughter.

Lord G. Daughter!

Gov. H. So it's out, after all. [*Aside*] It's a lie, you dog, you did know she was my daughter; you all knew it; you all conspired to torment me!

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Gov. H. Ha, ha, ha! confound your mirth! As if I hadn't plagues enough already.—And you have great reason to grin too, my lord, when you have thrown my gawky on your impudent valet.

Lord G. Who could ever have dreamt of—ha, ha, ha!—of finding this your little wonder of the country, brother?

Capt. H. Nay, my lord, she's the little wonder of the town too.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Gov. H. Mighty well, mighty well, mighty well!—Pray take your whole laugh out, good folks, since this is positively the last time of my entertaining you in this manner. A cottage shall henceforth be her portion, and a rope mine.

Brid. If you are my papa, I think you might give some better proof of your kindness. But I shan't stir. Why, I married on purpose that I might not care for you.

Gov. H. Why, thou eternal torment! my original sin! whose first fault was the greatest frailty of woman, and whose second, her greatest folly! dost thou, or the

designing knave who has entrapped thee merely for that purpose, imagine my wealth shall ever reward incontinence and ingratitude? No; go knit stockings to some regiment, where he is preferred to be drummer; warm yourself when the sun shines; soak every hard-earned crust in your own tears, and repent at leisure.
[Exit in a Rage.]

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Lord G. He to ridicule my mode of education! But what is the meaning of all this?

Wood. Truly, my lord, I believe it would be very hard to find any for either my uncle's words or actions. I am equally at a loss to guess as to Bridget here.

Vane. Hey, what? Bridget, did you say, sir? Why you little ugly witch, are you really Bridget?

Brid. Why I told you so all along; but you wouldn't believe me.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Brid. Oh dear heart! I am now as much afraid of my new husband as father.

Lord G. For thee, wench!—

Brid. [Falls on her Knees] Oh, no more looking up, for goodness' sake, my lord; I be sick enough of passing for a lady: but, if old Scratch ever puts such a trick again in my head, I hope—your lordship will catch me, that's all.
[Exit.]

Vane. I shall run distracted! have I married an—and all for nothing too?

Lord G. A punishment peculiarly just, as it results from abusing my confidence. Hence, wretch! nor ever, while you live, appear again in my presence.

[Exit Vane, looking furiously after Bridget.]

Lord G. 'Tis time to return to ourselves. We shall soon come to an eclairsissement, Woodville! since you won't marry, I will.

Wood. My lord!

Lord G. And you shall judge of my choice. [Exit.]

Capt. H. Now for it: whatever devil diverts himself among us to-day, I see he owes my sagacious lord here.

a grudge, as well as the rest; and I foresee that his wife and the governor's daughter will prove equally entertaining.

Re-enter LORD GLENMORE, leading CECILIA, followed by MISS MORTIMER.

Lord G. This lady, sir, I have selected; a worthy choice.

Wood. I dream, surely! that lady your choice? yours!

Lord G. Ungrateful son, had such been yours——

Wood. Why, this very angel is mine; my Cecilia, my first, my only love.

Lord G. How?

Cecil. Yes, my lord! you now know the unhappy object at once of your resentment, contempt, and admiration. My own misfortunes I had learned to bear, but those of Woodville overpower me. I deliver myself up to your justice; content to be every way his victim, so I am not his ruin.

Lord G. But to find you in this house——

Cecil. Your generous nephew and the amiable miss Mortimer distinguished me with the only asylum could shelter me from your son!

Lord G. They distinguished themselves! Oh, Woodville! did I think an hour ago I could be more angry with you? How durst you warp a mind so noble?

Wood. It is a crime my life cannot expiate; yet, if the sincerest anguish——

Lord G. I have one act of justice still in my power: my prejudice in favour of birth, and even a stronger prejudice, is corrected by this lovely girl. Of her goodness of heart, and greatness of mind, I have had incontestible proofs; and, if I thought you, Frank——

Cecil. Yet stay, my lord! nor kill me with too much kindness. Once your generosity might have made me happy, now only miserable. My reason, my pride, nay, even my love, induces me to refuse, as the only way to prove I deserve him. He has taught me to

know the world too late; nor will I retort on him the contempt I have incurred. Mr. Woodville will tell you whether I have not solemnly vowed——

Wood. Not to accept me without the consent of both fathers; and if mine consents, what doubt——

Gov. H. [Without] Stop that old man! Stop that mad parson! Stop him!

Grey. [Without] Nothing shall stop me in pursuit of my——

Enter GREY.

Ha! she is—she is here indeed! Providence has at length directed me to her. *[Runs to Cecilia.]*

Cecil. My father! covered with shame let me sink before you.

Lord G. Capt. H. Her father!

Re-enter GOVERNOR HARCOURT.

Grey. Rise, my glorious girl! rise purified and forgiven! rise to pity with me the weak minds that know not all thy value, and venerate the noble ones that do.

Gov. H. Hey! is it possible? Grey, is this my——

Grey. Yes, sir, this is your Cecilia; my Cecilia; the object of your avowed rejection and contempt.

Gov. H. Rejection and contempt! stand out of the way: let me embrace my daughter; let me take her once more to my heart. *[Runs, and embraces her.]*

Lord G. His daughter!

Gov. H. Yes, my friend, this is really my daughter; my own Cecilia; as sure as I am an old fool after being a young one, this good girl has a right to call me by the name of father: hasn't she, Grey? Why, my lord, this is the very parson I told you of! *[Takes Cecilia's Arm under his]* And now, young sir, what do you say to your uncle's freaks? *[To Woodville.]*

Wood. Say, sir? that had you ten thousand such, I would go through a patriarchal servitude, in hopes of Cecilia's hand for my reward.

Gov. H. And had I ten millions of money, and this only girl, thou shouldst have her, and that too for thy

noble freedom!—And what says my Cecilia to her father's first gift?

Cecil. Astonishment and pleasure leave me hardly power to say, that a disobedience to you, sir, would only double my fault; nor to worship that heaven which has led me through such a trial to such a reward!—Take all I have left myself to give you, Woodville, in my hand.

[Woodville kisses first her Hand, and then herself.]

Grey. Now let me die, my darling child! since I have seen thee once more innocent and happy.

Gov. H. And now kiss me, my Cecilia! kiss me.—'Od! miss Mortimer shall kiss me too, for loving my poor girl here.—Kiss me, all of you, old and young, men, women, and children!—'Od, I am so overjoyed, I dread the consequences.—D'ye hear there? Fetch me a surgeon and a bottle of wine.—I must both empty and fill my veins on this occasion!—Zooks, I could find in my heart to frisk it merrily in defiance of the gout, and take that cursed vixen below, whoever she is, for my partner!

Lord G. Methinks all seem rewarded but my poor Sophia here; and her protection of Cecilia deserves the highest recompense.—But whenever, my dear, you can present me the husband of your choice, I will present him with a fortune fit for my daughter.

Gov. H. Protect Cecilia!—'Od! she is a good girl, and a charming girl, and I honour the very tip of her feathers now!—If she could but fancy our Charles, I'd throw in something pretty on his side, I promise you.

Miss M. Frankness is the fashion.—What would you say, sir, and you, my lord, if I had fancied your Charles so much as to make him mine already?

Lord G. Hey-day! more discoveries! How's this, boy?

Capt. H. Even so, sir, indeed.

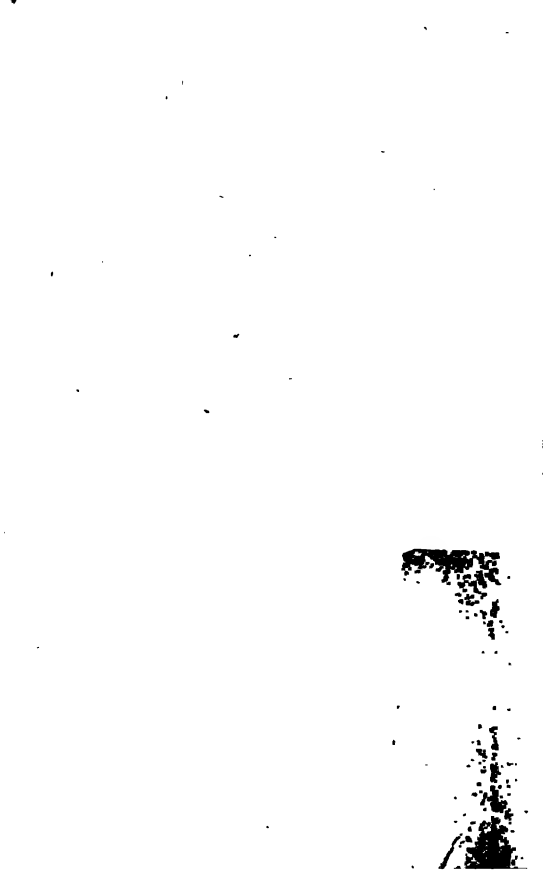
Lord G. It completes my satisfaction.

Gov. H. 'Od, brother! Who'd have thought you in

the right all the while? We'll never separate again, by the lord Harry! but knock down our Welsh friend's old house, and raise him one on the ruins large enough to contain the whole family of us, where he shall reign sole sovereign over all our future little Woodvilles and Cecílias.

Cecil. Oppressed with wonder, pleasure, gratitude, I must endeavour to forgive myself, when heaven thus graciously proves its forgiveness, in allying me to every human being my heart distinguishes.

Grey. Yes, my Cecilia, you may believe him, who never gave you a bad lesson, that you are now most truly entitled to esteem; since it requires a far greater exertion to stop your course down the hill of vice, than to toil slowly up toward virtue. [Exit.



THE
Clandestine Marriage.

A COMEDY.

BY G. COLMAN AND D. GARRICK.

CORRECTLY GIVEN, FROM COPIES USED IN THE THEATRES,

BY

THOMAS DIBDIN,

Author of several Dramatic Pieces: and

PROMPTER OF THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.

Huc adhibe vultus, et in una parce duobus:
Vivat, et ejusdem simul uterque parens!—OVID.



Printed at the Chiswick Press,

BY C. WHITTINGHAM;

FOR WHITTINGHAM AND ARLISS, PATERNOSTER
ROW, LONDON.

1815.



THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE

WAS first acted at Drury Lane in 1766.—When two such men, as Colman the Elder and Garrick, united to found a play upon an original idea of such a third man as Hogarth, much was to be expected; and all that expectation could rationally form is here most amply fulfilled. Much has been said respecting what share each author might claim in this admirable comedy; but without entering into useless inquiry, we shall content ourselves with observing that the abilities of this *par nobile fratrum* could never have been more happily blended. Mr. King's *Lord Ogleby* was a *chef d'œuvre* that greatly aided the effect of this junction of talent. His peculiar manner of acting it, we are told by Tate Wilkinson, was copied from an original character then living at Exeter; and, however times or manners may change, it has been considered perfectly necessary, by succeeding actors, to adhere to the original model as closely as possible. The first reception of this play may be easily imagined from the very high rank it has to this day maintained in public estimation.



PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. GARRICK.

POETS and painters, who from nature draw
Their best and richest stores, have made this law :
That each should neighbourly assist his brother,
And steal with decency from one another.
To-night, your matchless Hogarth gives the thought,
Which from his canvass to the stage is brought.
And who so fit to warm the poet's mind,
As he who pictur'd morals and mankind?
But not the same their characters and scenes ;
Both labour for one end, by diff'rent means ;
Each, as it suits him, takes a sep'rate road,
Their one great object, *Marriage a-la-mode* !
Where titles deign with oits to have and hold !
And change rich blood for more substantial gold !
And honour'd trade from int'rest turns aside,
To hazard happiness for titled pride.
The painter dead, yet still he charms the eye ;
While England lives, his fame can never die :
But he, who *struts his hour upon the stage*,
Can scarce extend his fame for half an age ;
Nor pen nor pencil can the actor save,
The art and artist share one common grave.
O, let me drop one tributary tear,
On poor Jack Falstaff's grave and Juliet's bier !
You to their worth must testimony give ;
'Tis in your hearts alone their fame can live.
Still as the scenes of life will shift away,
The strong impressions of their art decay.
Your children cannot feel what you have known ;
They'll boast of Quins and Cibbers of their own :
The greatest glory of our happy few,
Is to be felt and be approv'd by you.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted at Drury Lane, 1766.

Lord Ogleby	Mr. King.
Sir John Melvil	Mr. Holland.
Sterling	Mr. Yates.
Lovewell	Mr. Powell.
Sergeant Flower	Mr. Love.
Traverse	Mr. Lee.
Trueman	Mr. F. Aikin.
Canton	Mr. Baddeley.
Brush	Mr. Palmer.

Mrs. Heidelberg	Mrs. Clive.
Miss Sterling	Miss Pope.
Fanny	Mrs. Palmer.
Betty	Mrs. Abington.
Chambermaid	Miss Plym.
Trusty	Mrs. Love.

1814.

Drury Lane.

Covent Garden.

Lord Ogleby	Mr. Lovegrove.	Mr. Terry.
Sir John Melvil	Mr. Holland.	Mr. Barrymore.
Sterling	Mr. Penson.	Mr. Blanchard.
Lovewell	Mr. Decamp.	Mr. Abbott.
Sergeant Flower	Mr. Carr.	Mr. Creswell.
Traverse	Mr. Maddocks.	Mr. Brook.
Trueman	Mr. Fisher.	Mr. Atkins.
Canton	Mr. Wewitzer.	Mr. Farley.
Brush	Mr. R. Palmer.	Mr. Hamerton.

Mrs. Heidelberg	Mrs. Sparks.	Mrs. Davenport.
Miss Sterling	Mrs. Glover.	Mrs. Gibbs.
Fanny	Mrs. Edwin.	Miss Cooke.
Betty	Miss Mellon.	Mrs. Kennedy.
Chambermaid	Mrs. Scott.	Miss Treby.
Trusty	Mrs. Maddocks.	Mrs. Coates.

ACT THE FIRST



SCENE I. *A Room in STERLING'S House.*

Enter FANNY and BETTY, meeting.

Bet. [*Running in*] **MA'AM!** Miss Fanny! Ma'am!

Fan. What's the matter, Betty?

Bet. Oh, la! ma'am! as sure as I am alive, here is your husband—I saw him crossing the court-yard in his boots.

Fan. I am glad to hear it.—But pray now, my dear Betty, be cautious. Don't mention that word again on any account. You know we have agreed never to drop any expressions of that sort, for fear of an accident.

Bet. Dear ma'am, you may depend upon me. There is not a more trustier creature on the face of the earth than I am. Though I say it, I am as secret as the grave—and if it is never told till I tell it, it may remain untold till doomsday for Betty.

Fan. I know you are faithful—but in our circumstances we cannot be too careful.

Bet. Very true, ma'am! and yet I vow and protest

there's more plague than pleasure with a secret; especially if a body mayn't mention it to four or five of one's particular acquaintance.

Fan. Do but keep this secret a little while longer, and then I hope you may mention it to any body.—Mr. Lovewell will acquaint the family with the nature of our situation as soon as possible.

Bet. The sooner the better, I believe: for if he does not tell it, there's a little tell-tale, I know of, will come and tell it for him.

Fan. Fie, Betty!

[*Blushes.*

Bet. Ah! you may well blush. But you're not so sick, and so pale, and so wan, and so many qualms——

Fan. Have done! I shall be quite angry with you.

Bet. Angry—Bless the dear puppet! I am sure I shall love it as much as if it was my own.—I meant no harm, heaven's knows.

Fan. Well, say no more of this—it makes me uneasy.—All I have to ask of you is, to be faithful and secret, and not to reveal this matter till we disclose it to the family ourselves.

Bet. Me reveal it!—If I say a word, I wish I may be burned. I would not do you any harm for the world—and as for Mr. Lovewell, I am sure I have loved the dear gentleman ever since he got a tide-waiter's place for my brother.—But let me tell you both, you must leave off your soft looks to each other, and your whispers, and your glances, and your always sitting next to one another at dinner, and your long walks together in the evening.—For my part, if I had not been in the secret, I should have known you were a pair of lovers at least, if not man and wife, as——

Fan. See there now again! Pray be careful.

Bet. Well, well—nobody hears me.—Man and wife—I'll say no more.—What I tell you is very true, for all that——

Love. [*Within*] William!

Bet. Hark! I hear your husband——

Fan. What!

Bet. I say here comes Mr. Lovewell.—Mind the

caution I give you—I'll be whipped now if you are not the first person he sees or speaks to in the family. However, if you choose it, it's nothing at all to me—as you sow, so you must reap—as you brew, so you must bake.—I'll e'en slip down the back stairs, and leave you together. [Exit.

Fan. I see, I see I shall never have a moment's ease till our marriage is made public. New distresses crowd in upon me every day. The solicitude of my mind sinks my spirits, preys upon my health, and destroys every comfort of my life. It shall be revealed, let what will be the consequence.

Enter LOVEWELL.

Love. My love!—How's this?—In tears?—Indeed this is too much. You promised me to support your spirits, and to wait the determination of our fortune with patience. For my sake, for your own, be comforted! Why will you study to add to our uneasiness and perplexity?

Fan. Oh, Mr. Lovewell, the indelicacy of a secret marriage grows every day more and more shocking to me. I walk about the house like a guilty wretch: I imagine myself the object of the suspicion of the whole family, and am under the perpetual terrors of a shameful detection.

Love. Indeed, indeed, you are to blame. The amiable delicacy of your temper, and your quick sensibility, only serve to make you unhappy.—To clear up this affair properly to Mr. Sterling, is the continual employment of my thoughts. Every thing now is in a fair train. It begins to grow ripe for a discovery; and I have no doubt of its concluding to the satisfaction of ourselves, of your father, and the whole family.

Fan. And how it will, I am resolv'd it shall end soon—very soon. I would not live another week in this agony of mind to be mistress of the universe.

Love. Do not be too violent neither. Do not let us disturb the joy of your sister's marriage with the tumult this matter may occasion!—I have brought letters from

lord Ogleby and sir John Melvil to Mr. Sterling. They will be here this evening—and I dare say within this hour.

Fan. I am sorry for it.

Love. Why so?

Fan. No matter—only let us disclose our marriage immediately!

Love. As soon as possible.

Fan. But directly.

Love. In a few days, you may depend on it.

Fan. To-night—or to-morrow morning.

Love. That, I fear, will be impracticable.

Fan. Nay, but you must.

Love. Must! Why?

Fan. Indeed you must—I have the most alarming reasons for it.

Love. Alarming, indeed! for they alarm me, even before I am acquainted with them—What are they?

Fan. I cannot tell you.

Love. Not tell me?

Fan. Not at present. When all is settled, you shall be acquainted with every thing.

Love. Sorry they are coming!—Must be discovered!—What can this mean? Is it possible you can have any reasons that need be concealed from me?

Fan. Do not disturb yourself with conjectures—but rest assur'd, that though you are unable to divine the cause, the consequence of a discovery, be it what it will, cannot be attended with half the miseries of the present interval.

Love. You put me upon the rack—I would do any thing to make you easy.—But you know your father's temper—Money (you will excuse my frankness) is the spring of all his actions, which nothing but the idea of acquiring nobility or magnificence can ever make him forego—and these he thinks his money will purchase.—You know, too, your aunt's, Mrs. Heidelberg's, notions of the splendour of high life; her contempt for every thing that does not relish of what she calls quality; and that from the vast fortune in her hands,

by her late husband, she absolutely governs Mr. Sterling and the whole family. Now if they should come to the knowledge of this affair too abruptly, they might perhaps be insensed beyond all hopes of reconciliation.

Fan. Manage it your own way. I am persuaded.

Love. But in the mean time make yourself easy.

Fan. As easy as I can, I will.—We had better not remain together any longer at present.—Think of this business, and let me know how you proceed.

Love. Depend on my care! But pray be cheerful.

Fan. I will.

Enter STERLING, *as she is going.*

Ster. Hey-day! who have we got here?

Fan. [*Confused*] Mr. Lovewell, sir.

Ster. And where are you going, hussy?

Fan. To my sister's chamber, sir. [*Erit.*

Ster. Ah, Lovewell! What! always getting my foolish girl yonder into a corner?—Well—well—let us but once see her eldest sister fast married to sir John Melvil, we'll soon provide a good husband for Fanny, I warrant you.

Love. Would to heaven, sir, you would provide her one of my recommendation!

Ster. Yourself! eh, Lovewell?

Love. With your pleasure, sir.

Ster. Mighty well!

Love. And I flatter myself, that such a proposal would not be very disagreeable to miss Fanny.

Ster. Better and better!

Love. And if I could but obtain your consent, sir—

Ster. What! You marry Fanny?—no—no—that will never do, Lovewell!—You're a good boy, to be sure—I have a great value for you—but can't think of you for a son-in-law.—There's no stuff in the case; no money, Lovewell!

Love. My pretensions to fortune, indeed, are but moderate; but though not equal to splendour, sufficient to keep us above distress.—Add to which, that

I hope by diligence to increase it—and have love, honour——

Ster. But not the stuff, Lovewell!—Add one little round 0 to the sum total of your fortune, and that will be the finest thing you can say to me.—You know I've a regard for you—would do any thing to serve you—any thing on the footing of friendship—but——

Love. If you think me worthy of your friendship, sir, be assured that there is no instance in which I should rate your friendship so highly.

Ster. Pshaw! pshaw! that's another thing, you know.—Where money or interest is concerned, friendship is quite out of the question.

Love. But where the happiness of a daughter is at stake, you would not scruple, sure, to sacrifice a little to her inclinations.

Ster. Inclinations! why you would not persuade me that the girl is in love with you—eh, Lovewell?

Love. I cannot absolutely answer for miss Fanny, sir; but am sure that the chief happiness or misery of my life depends entirely upon her.

Ster. Why, indeed, now if your kinsman, lord Ogleby, would come down handsomely for you—but that's impossible—No, no—'twill never do—I must hear no more of this—Come, Lovewell, promise me that I shall hear no more of this.

Love. [*Hesitating*] I am afraid, sir, I should not be able to keep my word with you, if I did promise you.

Ster. Why, you would not offer to marry her without my consent! would you, Lovewell?

Love. Marry her, sir!

[*Confused.*]

Ster. Ay, marry her, sir!—I know very well, that a warm speech or two from such a dangerous young spark as you are would go much further towards persuading a silly girl to do what she has more than a month's mind to do, than twenty grave lectures from fathers or mothers, or uncles or aunts, to prevent her. But you would not, sure, be such a base fellow, such a treacherous young rogue, as to seduce my daughter's

affections, and destroy the peace of my family in that manner.—I must insist on it, that you give me your word not to marry her without my consent.

Love. Sir—I—I—as to that—I—I—beg, sir—Pray, sir, excuse me on this subject at present.

Ster. Promise then, that you will carry this matter no further without my approbation.

Love. You may depend on it, sir, that it shall go no further.

Ster. Well—well—that's enough—I'll take care of the rest, I warrant you.—Come, come, let's have done with this nonsense!—What's doing in town?—Any news upon 'Change?

Love. Nothing material.

Ster. Have you seen the currants, the soap, and Madeira safe in the warehouse? Have you compared the goods with the invoice and bills of lading, and are they all right?

Love. They are, sir.

Ster. And how are stocks?

Love. Fell one and a half this morning.

Ster. Well, well—some good news from America, and they'll be up again.—But how are lord Ogleby and sir John Melvil?—when are we to expect them?

Love. Very soon, sir. I came on purpose to bring you their commands. Here are letters from both of them.

[Giving Letters.]

Ster. Let me see—let me see—'Slife, how his lordship's letter is perfumed!—It takes my breath away. [Opening it] And French paper too!—with a slippery gloss on it that dazzles one's eyes.—My dear Mr. Sterling—[Reading]—Mercy on me! his lordship writes a worse hand than a boy at his exercise.—But how's this?—Eh!—With you to-night—Lawyers to-morrow morning.—To-night!—that's sudden, indeed—Where's my sister Heidelberg? She should know of this immediately.—Here, John! Harry! Thomas! [Calling the Servants] Harkye, Lovewell!

Love. Sir.

Ster. Mind now, how I'll entertain his lordship and

sir John—We'll show your fellows at the other end of the town how we live in the city—They shall eat gold—and drink gold—and lie in gold.—Here, cook! butler! [*Calling*] What signifies your birth, and education, and titles!—Money, money!—that's the stuff that makes the great man in this country.

Love. Very true, sir.

Ster. True, sir!—Why then have done with your nonsense of love and matrimony. You're not rich enough to think of a wife yet. A man of business should mind nothing but his business.—Where are these fellows?—John! Thomas!—[*Calling*] Get an estate, and a wife will follow of course—Ah! Love-well! an English merchant is the most respectable character in the universe.—'Slife, man, a rich English merchant may make himself a match for the daughter of a nabob.—Where are all my rascals?—Here, William!—

[*Exit, calling.*]

Love. So—as I suspected.—Quite averse to the match, and likely to receive the news of it with great displeasure.—What's best to be done?—Let me see—Suppose I get sir John Melvil to interest himself in this affair. He may mention it to lord Ogleby with a better grace than I can, and more probably prevail on him to interfere in it. I can open my mind also more freely to sir John. He told me, when I left him in town, that he had something of consequence to communicate, and that I could be of use to him. I am glad of it: for the confidence he reposes in me, and the service I may do him will ensure me his good offices.—Poor Fanny! it hurts me to see her so uneasy, and her making a mystery of the cause adds to my anxiety.—Something must be done upon her account; for, at all events, her solicitude shall be removed. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II. MISS STERLING's Dressing-room.

MISS STERLING and FANNY discovered.

Miss S. O, my dear sister, say no more!—This is downright hypocrisy.—You shall never convince me

that you don't envy me beyond measure.—Well, after all, it is extremely natural—It is impossible to be angry with you.

Fan. Indeed, sister, you have no cause.

Miss S. And you really pretend not to envy me?

Fan. Not in the least.

Miss S. And you don't in the least wish that you was just in my situation?

Fan. No, indeed I don't. Why should I?

Miss S. Why should you? What! on the brink of marriage, fortune, title—But I had forgot—There's that dear sweet creature, Mr. Lovewell, in the case.—You would not break your faith with your true love now for the world, I warrant you.

Fan. Mr. Lovewell!—always Mr. Lovewell!—Lord, what signifies Mr. Lovewell, sister?

Miss S. Pretty peevish soul!—O, my dear, grave, romantic sister!—a perfect philosopher in petticoats! Love and a cottage!—eh, Fanny—Ah, give me indifference and a coach and six!

Fan. And why not a coach and six without the indifference?—But pray when is this happy marriage of yours to be celebrated? I long to give you joy.

Miss S. In a day or two—I cannot tell exactly—Oh, my dear sister!—I must mortify her a little: [*Aside*] I know you have a pretty taste. Pray give me your opinion of my jewels. How do you like the style of this esclavage?

[*Showing Jewels.*]

Fan. Extremely handsome indeed, and well fancied.

Miss S. What d'ye think of these bracelets? I shall have a miniature of my father set round with diamonds to one, and sir John's to the other.—And this pair of ear-rings!—set transparent!—Here, the tops, you see, will take off, to wear in a morning, or in an undress—how d'ye like them?

[*Shows Jewels.*]

Fan. Very much, I assure you—Bless me, sister, you have a prodigious quantity of jewels—you'll be the very queen of diamonds.

Miss S. Ha, ha, ha! very well, my dear!—I shall be as fine as a little queen indeed.—I have a bouquet to

come home to-morrow—made up of diamonds, and rubies, and emeralds, and topazes, and amethysts—jewels of all colours, green, red, blue, yellow, intermixed—the prettiest thing you ever saw in your life!—The jeweller says I shall set out with as many diamonds as any body in town, except lady Brilliant, and Polly What-d'ye-call-it, lord Squander's kept mistress.

Fan. But what are your wedding-clothes, sister?

Miss S. O, white and silver, to be sure, you know.—I bought them at sir Joseph Lutestring's, and sat above an hour in the parlour behind the shop, consulting lady Lutestring about gold and silver stuffs, on purpose to mortify her.

Fan. Fie, sister! how could you be so abominably provoking?

Miss S. Oh, I have no patience with the pride of your city-knights' ladies.—Did you ever observe the airs of lady Lutestring, dressed in the richest brocade out of her husband's shop, playing crown whist at Haberdashers'-hall—whilst the civil smirking sir Joseph, with a snug wig trimmed round his broad face as close as a new cut yew hedge, and his shoes so black that they shine again, stands all day in his shop, fastened to his counter like a bad shilling?

Fan. Indeed, indeed, sister, this is too much—If you talk at this rate, you will be absolutely a bye-word in the city—You must never venture on the inside of Temple-bar again.

Miss S. Never do I desire it—never, my dear Fanny, I promise you. Oh, how I long to be transported to the dear regions of Grosvenor-square—far—far from the dull districts of Aldersgate, Cheap, Candlewick, and Farringdon Without and Within!—my heart goes pit-a-pat at the very idea of being introduced at court!—gilt chariot!—pieballed horses!—laced liveries!—and then the whispers buzzing round the circle—“Who is that young lady? Who is she?”—“Lady Melvil, ma'am!”—Lady Melvil! My ears tingle at the sound.—And then at dinner, instead of my father per-

petually asking—"Any news upon 'Change?"—to cry, "Well, sir John! any thing new from Arthur's?"—or, to say to some other woman of quality, "Was your ladyship at the duchess of Rabber's last night?—Did you call in at lady Thunder's?—In the immensity of crowd I swear I did not see you—Scarcely a soul at the opera last Saturday—Shall I see you at Carlisle-house next Thursday?"—Oh, the dear beau monde! I was born to move in the sphere of the great world.

Fan. And so in the midst of all this happiness you have no compassion for me—no pity for us poor mortals in common life.

Miss S. [*Affectedly*] You?—You're above pity.—You would not change conditions with me.—You're over head and ears in love, you know.—Nay, for that matter, if Mr. Lovewell and you come together, as I doubt not you will, you will live very comfortably, I dare say.—He will mind his business—you'll employ yourself in the delightful care of your family—and once in a season, perhaps, you'll sit together in a front box at a benefit play, as we used to do at our dancing-master's, you know—and perhaps I may meet you in the summer, with some other citizens at Tunbridge. For my part, I shall always entertain a proper regard for my relations.—You sha'n't want my countenance, I assure you.

Fan. Oh, you're too kind, sister!

Enter MRS. HEIDELBERG.

Mrs. H. [*At entering*] Here this evening!—I vow and perjest we shall scarce have time to provide for them—Oh, my dear! [*To Miss Sterling*] I am glad to see you're not quite in a dish-abille. Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvil will be here to-night.

Miss S. To-night, ma'am?

Mrs. H. Yes, my dear, to-night.—Oh, put on a smarter cap, and change these ordinary ruffles!—Lord, I have such a deal to do, I shall scarce have time to slip on my Italian latestring.—Where is this dawdle of a housekeeper?

Enter TRUSTY,

Oh, here, Trusty! do you know that people of quality are expected here this evening?

Trus. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Well—Do you be sure now that every thing is done in the most genteel manner—and to the honour of the family.

Trus. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Well—but mind what I say to you.

Trus. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. H. His lordship is to lie in the chintz bed-chamber—d'ye hear?—and sir John in the blue damask room—his lordship's valet-de-chamb in the opposite—

Trus. But Mr. Lovewell is come down—and you know that's his room, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Well—well—Mr. Lovewell may make shift—or get a bed at the George.—But harkye, Trusty!

Trus. Ma'am!

Mrs. H. Get the great dining-room in order as soon as possible. Unpaper the curtains, take the kivers off the couch and the chairs, and, do you hear—take the china dolls out of my closet, and put them on the mantelpiece immediately—

Trus. Yes, ma'am.

[*Going.*]

Mrs. H. And mind, as soon as his lordship comes in, be sure you set all their heads a nodding.

Trus. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Be gone, then! fly, this instant!—Where's my brother Sterling?

Trus. Talking to the butler, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Very well. [*Exit Trusty*] Miss Fanny, I protest I did not see you before—Lord, child, what's the matter with you?

Fan. With me! Nothing, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Bless me! Why your face is as pale, and black, and yellow—of fifty colours, I vow and protest.—And then you have drest yourself as loose and as big—I declare there is not such a thing to be seen now, as a young woman with a fine waist—You all

make yourselves as round as Mrs. Deputy Barter. Go, child!—You know the quality will be here by-and-by. Go, and make yourself a little more fit to be seen. [Exit Fanny] She is gone away in tears—absolutely crying, I vow and perjest.—This ridiculous love! we must put a stop to it. It makes a perfect natural of the girl.

Miss S. Poor soul! she can't help it. [Affectedly.]

Mrs. H. Well, my dear! Now I shall have an opportunity of convincing you of the absurdity of what you was telling me concerning sir John Melvil's behaviour to you.

Miss S. Oh, it gives me no manner of uneasiness. But indeed, ma'am, I cannot be persuaded but that sir John is an extremely cold lover. Such distant civility, grave looks, and lukewarm professions of esteem for me and the whole family! I have heard of flames and darts, but sir John's is a passion of mere ice and snow.

Mrs. H. Oh fie, my dear! I am perfectly ashamed of you. That's so like the notions of your poor sister! What you complain of as coldness and indifference, is nothing but the extreme gentility of his address, an exact picture of the manners of quality.

Miss S. O, he is the very mirror of complaisance! full of formal bows and set speeches!—I declare, if there was any violent passion on my side, I should be quite jealous of him.

Mrs. H. Jealous!—I say, jealous, indeed—Jealous of who, pray?

Miss S. My sister Fanny. She seems a much greater favourite than I am; and he pays her infinitely more attention, I assure you.

Mrs. H. Lord! d'ye think a man of fashion, as he is, cannot distinguish between the genteel and the vulgar part of the family?—Between you and your sister, for instance—or me and my brother?—Be advised by me, child! It is all politeness and good-breeding. Nobody knows the quality better than I do.

Miss S. In my mind the old lord, his uncle, has ten times more gallantry about him than sir John. He is

full of attentions to the ladies, and smiles, and grins, and leers, and ogles, and fills every wrinkle of his old, wizened face with comical expressions of tenderness. I think he would make an admirable sweetheart.

Enter STERLING.

Ster. [*At entering*] No fish?—Why the pond was dragged but yesterday morning—There's carp and tench in the boat.—Pox on't, if that dog Lovewell had any thought, he would have brought down a turbot, or some of the land-carriage mackrell.

Mrs. H. Lord, brother, I am afraid his lordship and sir John will not arrive while it is light.

Ster. I warrant you.—But pray, sister Heidelberg, let the turtle be dressed to-morrow, and some venison.—and let the gardener cut some pine-apples—and get out some ice.—I'll answer for wine, I warrant you—I'll give them such a glass of champagne as they never drank in their lives—no, not at a duke's table.

Mrs. H. Pray now, brother, mind how you behave. I am always in a fright about you with people of quality. Take care that you don't fall asleep directly after supper, as you commonly do. Take a good deal of snuff; and that will keep you awake—And don't burst out with your horrible loud horse-laughs. It is monstrous vulgar.

Ster. Never fear, sister!—Who have he here?

Mrs. H. It is Mons. Cantoon, the Swish gentleman that lives with his lordship, I vow and perjest.

Enter CANTON.

Ster. Ah, mounseer! your servant.—I am very glad to see you, mounseer.

Can. Mosh oblige to Mons. Sterling.—Ma'am, I am your—*Matemoiselle*, I am your. [*Bowing round.*]

Mrs. H. Your humble servant, Mr. Cantoon!

Can. Kiss your hand, matam!

Ster. Well, mounseer!—and what news of your good family?—when are we to see his lordship and sir John?

Can. Mons. Sterling! milor Ogleby and sir' Jean Melvil will be here in one quarter hour.

Ster. I am glad to hear it.

Mrs. H. O, I am perdigious glad to hear it. Being so late, I was afeard of some accident.—Will you please to have any thing, Mr. Cantoon, after your journey?

Can. No, tank you, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Shall I go and show you the apartments, sir?

Can. You do me great honeur, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Come then!—come, my dear.

[To Miss Sterling. *Excunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.



SCENE I.

*An Anti-chamber to LORD OGLEBY's Bed-chamber.
Table with Chocolate, and small Case for Medicines.*

BRUSH and Chambermaid discovered.

Brush. You shall stay, my dear, I insist upon it.

Cham. Nay pray, sir, don't be so positive; I cannot stay indeed.

Brush. You shall drink one cup to our better acquaintance.

Cham. I seldom drinks chocolate; and, if I did, one has no satisfaction with such apprehensions about one—if my lord should wake, or the Swiss gentleman should see one, or madam Heidelberg should know of it, I should be frighted to death—besides, I have had my tea already this morning—I'm sure I hear my lord.

[In a fright.]

Brush. No, no, madam, don't flutter yourself—the moment my lord wakes he rings his bell, which I answer sooner or later, as it suits my convenience.

Cham. But should he come upon us without ringing—

Brush. I'll forgive him if he does—This key [*Takes a Vial out of the Case*] looks him up till I please to let him out.

Cham. Law! sir, that's potecary's stuff.

Brush. It is so—but without this he can no more get out of bed—that he can read without spectacles—[*Sips*] What with qualms, age, rheumatism, and a few surfeits in his youth, he must have a great deal of brushing, oiling, screwing, and winding-up, to set him a going for the day.

Cham. [*Sips*] That's prodigious indeed—[*Sips*] My lord seems quite in a decay.

Brush. Yes, he's quite a spectacle, [*Sips*] a mere corpse, till he is reviv'd and refresh'd from our little magazine here—When the restorative pills and cordial waters warm his stomach, and get into his head, vanity frisks in his heart, and then he sets up for the lover, the rake, and the fine gentleman.

Cham. [*Sips*] Poor gentleman! but should the Swiss gentleman come upon us. [*Frightened.*]

Brush. Why then the English gentleman would be very angry.—No foreigner must break in upon my privacy. [*Sips*] But I can assure you Monsieur Canton is otherwise employ'd—He is obliged to skim the cream of half a score newspapers for my lord's breakfast—ha, ha, ha! Pray, madam, drink your cup peaceably—My lord's chocolate is remarkably good; he won't touch a drop, but what comes from Italy.

Cham. [*Sipping*] 'Tis very fine indeed! [*Sips*] and charmingly perfum'd—it smells for all the world like our young ladies' dressing-boxes.

Brush. You have an excellent taste, madam; and I must beg of you to accept of a few cakes for your own drinking; [*Takes them out of a Drawer in the Table*] and in return I desire nothing but to taste the perfume of your lips. [*Kisses her*]—A small return of favours, madam, will make, I hope, this country and retirement agreeable to us both. [*He bows, she courtesies*]—Come,

pray sit down—Your young ladies are fine girls, faith; [Sips] though, upon my soul, I am quite of my old lord's mind about them; and were I inclined to matrimony, I should take the youngest. [Sips.]

Cham. Miss Fanny! The most affablest, and the most best natur'd creter!—

Brush. And the eldest a little haughty or so—

Cham. More haughtier and prouder than Saturn himself—but this I say quite confidential to you; for one would not hurt a young lady's marriage, you know.

[Sips.]

Brush. By no means; but you cannot hurt it with us—we don't consider tempers—we want money, Mrs. Nancy. Give us plenty of that, we'll abate you a great deal in other particulars, ha, ha, ha!

Cham. Bless me, here's somebody!—[Bell rings]—Oh, 'tis my lord!—Well, your servant, Mr. Brush—I'll clean the cups in the next room.

Brush. Do so—but never mind the bell—I sha'n't go this half hour.—Will you drink tea with me in the afternoon?

Cham. Not for the world, Mr. Brush—I'll be here to set all things to rights—But I must not drink tea indeed—and so your servant.

[Exit, with Teaboard. Bell rings again.]

Brush. Yes, yes, I hear you.—It is impossible to stupify one's self in the country for a week, without some little flirting with the Abigails;—this is much the handsomest wench in the house, except the old citizen's youngest daughter, and I have not time enough to lay a plan for her.—[Bell rings] O, my lord— [Going.]

Enter CANTON, with Newspapers in his Hand.

Can. Monsieur Brush!—Maistre Brush!—my lor stirra yet?

Brush. He has just rung his bell—I am going to him. [Exit.]

Can. Depechez vous donc. [Puts on his Spectacles]—I wish de deveil had all dese papiers—I forget as fast as I read—de Advertise put out of my head de

Gazette, de Chronique, and so dey all go l'un après l'autre—I must get some nouvelle for my lor, or he'll be enragé contre moi.—Voyons! [*Reads the Paper*] Hére is nothing but Anti-Sejanus and advertise—

Enter Maid, with Chocolate Things.

Vat you want, chil?—

Maid. Only the chocolate things, sir.

Can. O, ver well—dat is good girl—and very prit too. [*Exit Maid.*]

Lord O. [*Within*] Canton! he, he! — [*Coughs*] Canton!—

Can. I come, my!—vat shall I do?—I have no news—he will make great tintamarre!—

Lord O. [*Within*] Canton! I say, Canton! Where are you?

Enter LORD OGLEBY, leaning on BRUSH.

Can. Here, my lor!—I ask pardon, my lor, I have not finish de papiers.—

Lord O. D—n your pardon and your papiers—I want you here, Canton.

Can. Den I run, dat is all.

[*Shuffles along. Lord Ogleby leans upon Canton too, and comes forward.*]

Lord O. You Swiss are the most unaccountable mixture—you have the language and the impertinence of the French, with the laziness of Dutchmen. E

Can. 'Tis very true, my lor—I can't help—

Lord O. [*Cries out*] O Diavolo!

Can. You are not in pain, I hope, my lor?

Lord O. Indeed but I am, my lor.—That vulgar fellow, Sterling, with his city politeness, would force me down his slope last night to see a clay-coloured ditch, which he calls a canal; and what with the dew and the east wind, my hips and shoulders are absolutely screw'd to my body.

Can. A littel veritable eau d'arquibusade vil set all to right—

[*Lord Ogleby sits down, and Brush gives Chocolate.*]

Lord O. Where are the palsy drops, Brush?

Brush. Here, my lord!

[Pours out.]

Lord O. Quelle nouvelle avez vous, Canton?

Can. A great deal of papier, but no news at all.

Lord O. What! nothing at all, you stupid fellow?

Can. Oui, my lor, I have little advertise here vil give you more plaisir den all de lies about nothing at all.
La viola!

[Puts on his Spectacles.]

Lord O. Come, read it, Canton, with good emphasis, and good discretion.

Can. I vil, my lor. [Reads] Dere is no question but that the cosmetique royale vil utterly take away all heats, pimples, frecks, oder eruptions of de skin, and likewise de wrinque of old age, &c. &c.—A great deal more, my lor.—Be sure to ask for de cosmetique royale, signed by the docteur own hand—Dere is more raison for dis caution dan good men vil tink.—Rh bien, my lor.

Lord O. Rh bien, Canton!—Will you purchase any?

Can. For you, my lor?

Lord O. For me, you old puppy? for what?

Can. My lor!

Lord O. Do I want cosmetics?

Can. My lor!

Lord O. Look in my face—come, be sincere.—Does it want the assistance of art?

Can. [With his Spectacles] En verité non—'Tis vry smoose and brillian—but tote dat you might take a little by way of prevention.

Lord O. You thought like an old fool, monsieur, as you generally do. Try it upon your own face, Canton, and if it has any effect, the doctor cannot have a better proof of the efficacy of his nostrum.—The surfeit water, Brush! [Brush pours out]—What do you think, Brush, of this family we are going to be connected with?—Rh!

Brush. Very well to marry in, my lord; but it would never do to live with.

Lord O. You are right, Brush—There is no washing the blackmoor white—Mr. Sterling will never get rid of Blackfriars—always taste of the Borachio

—and the poor woman, his sister, is so busy, and so notable, to make one welcome, that I have not yet got over the fatigue of her first reception; it almost amounted to suffocation!—I think the daughters are tolerable—Where's my cephalic snuff?

[Brush gives him a Box.

Can. Dey tink so of you, my lor, for dey look at nothing else, ma foi.

Lord O. Did they? Why I think they did a little—Where's my glass?—[Brush puts one on the Table] The youngest is delectable. [Takes Snuff.

Can. O oui, my lor, very delect inteed; she made doux yeux at you, my lor.

Lord O. She was particuler. —The eldest, my nephew's lady, will be a most valuable wife; she has all the vulgar spirits of her father and aunt, happily blended with the termagant qualities of her deceased mother.—Some peppermint water, Brush—How happy is it, Canton, for young ladies in general, that people of quality overlook every thing in a marriage contract but their fortune.

Can. C'est bien heureux, et commode aussi.

Lord O. Brush, give me that pamphlet by my bed side.—[Brush goes for it] Canton, do you wait in the anti-chamber, and let nobody interrupt me till I call you.

Can. Mush good may do your lordship. [Exit.

Lord O. [To Brush, who brings the Pamphlet] And now, Brush, leave me a little to my studies. [Exit Brush]—What can I possibly do among these women here, with this confounded rheumatism: It is a most grievous enemy to gallantry and address. [Gets off his Chair] He! courage, my lor! by heavens, I'm another creature. [Hums and dances a little] It will do, faith.—Bravo, my lor! these girls have absolutely inspir'd me—If they are for a game of romps—Me viola pret! [Sings and dances]—Oh!—that's an ugly twinge—but it's gone.—I have rather too much of the lily this morning in my complexion; a faint tincture of the rose will give a delicate spirit to my eyes for the day.

[Unlocks a Drawer at the Bottom of the Glass, and takes out Rouge; while he is painting himself, a knocking at the Door] Who's there? I won't be disturb'd.

Can. [Without] My lor! my lor! here is monsieur Sterling, to pay his devoir to you this morn in your chambre.

Lord O. What a fellow! [Softly]—I am extremely honour'd by Mr. Sterling.—Why don't you see him in, monsieur? [Aloud]—I wish he was at the bottom of his stinking canal. [Softly. Door opens] Oh, my dear Mr. Sterling, you do me a great deal of honour.

Enter STERLING and LOVEWELL.

Ster. I hope, my lord, that your lordship slept well last night—I believe there are no better beds in Europe than I have—I spare no pains to get them, nor money to buy them.—His majesty, God bless him, don't sleep upon a better out of his palace; and if I had said in too, I hope no treason, my lord.

Lord O. Your beds are like every thing else about you—incomparable!—They not only make one rest well, but give one spirits, Mr. Sterling.

Ster. What say you then, my lord, to another walk in the garden? You must see my water by day-light, and my walks, and my slopes, and my clumps, and my bridge, and my flowering trees, and my bed of Dutch tulips.—Matters look'd but dim last night, my lord. I feel the dew in my great toe—but I would put on a cut shoe, that I might be able to walk you about—I may be laid up to-morrow.

Lord O. I pray heaven you may! [Aside.]

Ster. What say you, my lord?

Lord O. I was saying, sir, that I was in hopes of seeing the young ladies at breakfast: Mr. Sterling, they are, in my mind, the finest tulips in this part of the world, he, he, he!

Can. Bravissimo, my lor! ha, ha, he!

Ster. They shall meet your lordship in the garden—we won't lose our walk for them; I'll take you a little round before breakfast, and a larger before dinner, and

in the evening you shall go the grand tour, as I call it, ha, ha, ha!

Lord O. Not a foot I hope, Mr. Sterling; consider your gout, my good friend—you'll certainly be laid by the heels for your politeness, he, he he!

Can. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis admirable, en vérité!

[Laughs very heartily.]

Ster. If my young man *[To Lovewell]* here would but laugh at my jokes, which he ought to do, as monsieur does at yours, my lord, we should be all life and mirth.

Lord O. What say you, Canton, will you take my kinsman into your tuition? You have certainly the most companionable laugh I ever met with, and never out of tune.

Can. But when your lordship is out of spirits.

Lord O. Well said, Canton! But here comes my nephew, to play his part.

Enter SIR JOHN MELVIL.

Well, sir John, what news from the island of love? Have you been sighing and serenading this morning?

Sir J. I am glad to see your lordship in such spirits this morning.

Lord O. I'm sorry to see you so dull, sir—What poor things, Mr. Sterling, these very young fellows are! They make love with faces as if they were burying the dead—though indeed a marriage sometimes may be properly called a burying of the living—eh, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. Not if they have enough to live upon, my lord—Ha, ha, ha!

Can. Dat is all monsieur Sterling tink of.

Sir J. Pr'ythee, Lovewell, come with me into the garden; I have something of consequence for you, and I must communicate it directly. *[Apart to Lovewell.]*

Love. We'll go together. *[Apart.]* If your lordship and Mr. Sterling please, we'll prepare the ladies to attend you in the garden.

[Exeunt Sir John Melvil and Lovewell.]

Ster. My girls are always ready; I make them rise soon, and to-bed early; their husbands shall have them with good constitutions and good fortunes, if they have nothing else, my lord.

Lord O. Fine things, Mr. Sterling!

Ster. Fine things indeed, my lord!—Ah, my lord, had you not run off your speed in your youth, you had not been so crippled in your age, my lord.

Lord O. Very pleasant, he, he, he!—

[*Half laughing.*]

Ster. Here's mounseer now, I suppose, is pretty near your lordship's standing; but having little to eat, and little to spend in his own country, he'll wear three of your lordship out—eating and drinking kills us all.

Lord O. Very pleasant, I protest—What a vulgar dog!

[*Aside.*]

Can. My lor so old as me!—He is chicken to me—and look like a boy to pauvre me.

Ster. Ha, ha, ha! Well said, mounseer—keep to that, and you'll live in any country of the world—Ha, ha, ha!—But, my lord, I will wait upon you in the garden: we have but a little time to breakfast—I'll go for my hat and cane, fetch a little walk with you, my lord, and then for the hot rolls and butter! [Exit.]

Lord O. I shall attend you with pleasure—Hot rolls and butter in July! I sweat with the thoughts of it—What a strange beast it is!

Can. C'est un barbare.

Lord O. He is a vulgar dog; and if there was not so much money in the family, which I can't do without, I would leave him and his hot rolls and butter directly—Come along, monsieur! [Exit.]

SCENE II. The Garden.

Enter SIR JOHN MELVIL and LOVEWELL.

Love. In my room this morning? Impossible.

Sir J. Before five this morning, I promise you.

Love. On what occasion?

Sir J. I was so anxious to disclose my mind to you, that I could not sleep in my bed—but I found that you could not sleep neither—The bird was flown, and the nest long since cold—Where was you, Lovewell?

Love. Pooh! pr'ythee! ridiculous!

Sir J. Come now, which was it? Miss Sterling's maid? a pretty little rogue! or miss Fanny's Abigail? a sweet soul too—or—

Love. Nay, nay, leave trifling, and tell me your business.

Sir J. Well, but where was you, Lovewell?

Love. Walking—writing—what signifies where I was?

Sir J. Walking! yes, I dare say. It rained as hard as it could pour. Sweet, refreshing showers to walk in! No, no, Lovewell. Now would I give twenty pounds to know which of the maids—

Love. But your business! your business, sir John!

Sir J. Let me a little into the secrets of the family.

Love. Pshaw!

Sir J. Poor Lovewell! he can't bear it, I see. [*Aside*] She charged you not to kiss and tell, eh, Lovewell?—However, though you will not honour me with your confidence, I'll venture to trust you with mine.—What do you think of miss Sterling?

Love. What do I think of miss Sterling?

Sir J. Ay, what do you think of her?

Love. An odd question!—but I think her a smart, lively girl, full of mirth and sprightliness.

Sir J. All mischief and malice, I doubt.

Love. How?

Sir J. But her person—what d'ye think of that?

Love. Pretty and agreeable.

Sir J. A little grisette thing.

Love. What is the meaning of all this?

Sir J. I'll tell you. You must know, Lovewell, that notwithstanding all appearances—*[A loud laugh heard without]* We are interrupted—When they are gone, I'll explain.

Enter LORD OGLEBY, STERLING, MRS. HEIDELBERG, MISS STERLING, and FANNY.

Lord O. Great improvements indeed, Mr. Sterling! wonderful improvements! The four seasons in lead, the flying Mercury, and the bason with Neptune in the middle, are in the very extreme of fine taste. You have as many rich figures as the man at Hyde-park corner.

Ster. The chief pleasure of a country house is to make improvements, you know, my lord. I spare no expense, not I.—This is quite another-guess sort of a place than it was when I first took it, my lord. We were surrounded with trees. I cut down above fifty to make the lawn before the house, and let in the wind and the sun—smack smooth—as you see.—Then I made a green-house out of the old laundry, and turned the brew-house into a pinery.—The high octagon summer-house, you see yonder, is raised on the mast of a ship, given me by an East India captain, who has turned many a thousand of my money. It commands the whole road. All the coaches, and chariots, and chaises, pass and repass under your eye. I'll mount you up there in the afternoon, my lord.

Lord O. No, I thank you, Mr. Sterling.

Ster. 'Tis the pleasantest place in the world to take a pipe and a bottle, and so you shall say, my lord.

Lord O. Ay, or a bowl of punch, or a can of flip, Mr. Sterling; for it looks like a cabin in the air.—If flying chairs were in use, the captain might make a voyage to the Indies in it still, if he had but a fair wind.

Can. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. H. My brother's a little comical in his ideas, my lord!—But you'll excuse him.—I have a little Gothic dairy, fitted up entirely in my own taste.—In the evening, I shall hope for the honour of your lordship's company to take a dish of tea there, or a sullabub warm from the cow.

Lord O. I have every moment a fresh opportunity of

admiring the elegance of Mrs. Heidelberg—the very flower of delicacy and cream of politeness.

Mrs. H. O, my lord!— [Leers at Lord Ogleby.]

Lord O. O, madam!— [Leers at Mrs. Heidelberg.]

Ster. How d'ye like these close walks, my lord?

Lord O. A most excellent serpentine! It forms a perfect maze, and winds like a truelover's knot.

Ster. Ay, here's none of your straight lines here—but all taste—zigzag—crinkum-crankum—in and out—right and left—to and again—twisting and turning like a worm, my lord!

Lord O. Admirably laid out indeed, Mr. Sterling! one can hardly see an inch beyond one's nose any where in these walks.—You are a most excellent economist of your land, and make a little go a great way.—It lies together in as small parcels as if it was placed in pots out at your window in Gracechurch-street.

Can. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Lord O. What d'ye laugh at, Canton?

Can. Ah! que cette similitude est drole! so clever what you say, mi lor!—

Lord O. You seem mightily engaged, madam. What are those pretty hands so busily employed about?

[To Fanny.]

Fan. Only making up a nosegay, my lord!—Will your lordship do me the honour of accepting it?

[Presents it.]

Lord O. I'll wear it next my heart, madam!—I see the young creature dotes on me!

[Aside.]

Miss S. Lord, sister! you've loaded his lordship with a bunch of flowers as big as the cook, or the nurse, carries to town, on a Monday morning, for a beanpot.—Will your lordship give me leave to present you with this rose and a sprig of sweetbriar?

Lord O. The truest emblems of yourself, madam! all sweetness and poignancy.—A little jealous, poor soul!

[Aside.]

Ster. Now, my lord, if you please, I'll carry you to see my ruins.

Mrs. H. You'll absolutely fatigue his lordship with over walking, brother!

Lord O. Not at all, madam! We're in the garden of Eden, you know; in the region of perpetual spring, youth, and beauty. [*Leers at the Women.*]

Mrs. H. Quite the man of quality, I vow and pertest. [*Aside.*]

Can. Take a my arm, mi lor!

[*Lord Ogleby leans on him.*]

Ster. I'll only show his lordship my ruins, and the cascade, and the Chinese bridge, and then we'll go in to breakfast.

Lord O. Ruins, did you say, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. Ay, ruins, my lord! and they are reckoned very fine ones, too. You would think them ready to tumble on your head. It has just cost me a hundred and fifty pounds to put my ruins in thorough repair. This way, if your lordship pleases.

Lord O. [*Going, stops*] What steeple's that we see yonder?—the parish church, I suppose.

Ster. Ha, ha, ha! that's admirable. It is no church at all, my lord! it is a spire that I have built against a tree, a field or two off, to terminate the prospect. One must always have a church, or an obelisk, or something to terminate the prospect, you know. That's a rule in taste, my lord!

Lord O. Very ingenious indeed! For my part, I desire no finer prospect than this I see before me. [*Leers at the Women*] Simple, yet varied; bounded, yet extensive.—Get away, Canton! [*Pushes Canton away*] I want no assistance—I'll walk with the ladies.

Ster. This way, my lord!

Lord O. Lead on, sir!—We young folks here will follow you.—Madam!—Miss Sterling!—Miss Fanny! I attend you.

[*Exit after Sterling, gallanting the Ladies.*]

Can. [*Following*] He is cock o'de game, ma foy!

[*Exit.*]

Sir J. Harkye, Lovewell, you must not go—at

length, thank heaven! I have an opportunity to unbo-som.—I know you are faithful, Lovewell, and flatter myself you would rejoice to serve me.

Love. Be assured you may depend upon me.

Sir J. You must know then, notwithstanding all appearances, that this treaty of marriage between miss Sterling and me will come to nothing.

Love. How!

Sir J. It will be no match, Lovewell.

Love. No match?

Sir J. No.

Love. You amaze me. What should prevent it?

Sir J. I.

Love. You! Wherefore?

Sir J. I don't like her.

Love. Very plain indeed! I never supposed that you were extremely devoted to her from inclination, but thought you always considered it as a matter of convenience rather than affection.

Sir J. Very true. I came into the family without any impressions on my mind—with an unimpassioned indifference, ready to receive one woman as soon as another. I looked upon love, serious sober love, as a chimera, and marriage as a thing of course, as you know most people do. But I, who was lately so great an infidel in love, am now one of its sincerest votaries.—In short, my defection from miss Sterling proceeds from the violence of my attachment to another.

Love. Another! So, so! here will be fine work. And pray who is she?

Sir J. Who is she! who can she be but Fanny—the tender, amiable, engaging Fanny?

Love. Fanny! What Fanny?

Sir J. Fanny Sterling. Her sister—Is not she an angel, Lovewell?

Love. Her sister? Confusion!—You must not think of it, sir John.

Sir J. Not think of it? I can think of nothing else. Nay, tell me, Lovewell, was it possible for me to be indulged in a perpetual intercourse with two such

objects as Fanny and her sister, and not find my heart led by insensible attraction towards her?—You seem confounded—Why don't you answer me?

Love. Indeed, sir John, this event gives me infinite concern. Why did not you break this affair to the family before?

Sir J. Under such embarrassed circumstances as I have been, can you wonder at my irresolution or perplexity? Nothing but despair, the fear of losing my dear Fanny, could bring me to a declaration even now; and yet I think I know Mr. Sterling so well, that strange as my proposal may appear, if I can make it advantageous to him as a money transaction, as I am sure I can, he will certainly come into it.

Love. But even suppose he should, which I very much doubt, I don't think Fanny herself would listen to your addresses.

Sir J. You are deceived a little in that particular.

Love. You'll find I'm in the right.

Sir J. I have some little reason to think otherwise.

Love. You have not declared your passion to her already?

Sir J. Yes, I have.

Love. Indeed!—And—and—and how did she receive it?

Sir J. I think it is not very easy for me to make my addresses to any woman, without receiving some little encouragement.

Love. Encouragement!—did she give you any encouragement?

Sir J. I don't know what you call encouragement—but she blushed—and cried—and desired me not to think of it any more:—upon which I pressed her hand—kissed it—swore she was an angel—and I could see it tickled her to the soul.

Love. And did she express no surprise at your declaration?

Sir J. Why, faith, to say the truth, she was a little surprised—and she got away from me too before I could thoroughly explain myself. If I should not meet

with an opportunity of speaking to her, I must get you to deliver a letter for me.

Love. I!—a letter!—I had rather have nothing—

Sir J. Nay, you promised me your assistance—and I am sure you cannot scruple to make yourself useful on such an occasion.—You may, without suspicion, acquaint her verbally of my determined affection for her, and that I am resolved to ask her father's consent.

Love. As to that, I—your commands, you know—that is, if she—Indeed, sir John, I think you are in the wrong.

Sir J. Well—well—that's my concern—Ha! there she goes, by heaven! along that walk yonder, d'ye see! I'll go to her immediately.

Love. You are too precipitate. Consider what you are doing.

Sir J. I would not lose this opportunity for the universe.

Love. Nay, pray don't go! Your violence and eagerness may overcome her spirits.—The shock will be too much for her. *[Detains him.]*

Sir J. Nothing shall prevent me.—Ha! now she turns into another walk—Let me go! *[Breaks from him]* I shall lose her. *[Going, turns back]* Be sure now to keep out of the way! If you interrupt us, I shall never forgive you. *[Exit hastily.]*

Love. 'Sdeath! I can't bear this. In love with my wife! acquaint me with his passion for her! make his addresses before my face!—I shall break out before my time.—This was the meaning of Fanny's uneasiness. She could not encourage him—I am sure she could not.—Ha! they are turning into the walk, and coming this way. Shall I leave the place?—Leave him to solicit my wife? I can't submit to it.—They come nearer and nearer.—If I stay, it will look suspicious—It may betray us, and incense him.—They are here—I must go—I am the most unfortunate fellow in the world!

[Exit]

Re-enter SIR JOHN MELVIL and FANNY.

Fan. Leave me, sir John—I beseech you, leave me! Nay, why will you persist to follow me with idle solicitations, which are an affront to my character, and an injury to your own honour?

Sir J. I know your delicacy, and tremble to offend it: but let the urgency of the occasion be my excuse! Consider, madam, that the future happiness of my life depends on my present application to you! Consider that this day must determine my fate; and these are perhaps the only moments left me to incline you to warrant my passion, and to entreat you not to oppose the proposals I mean to open to your father.

Fan. For shame, for shame, sir John! Think of your previous engagements! Think of your own situation, and think of mine! What have you discovered in my conduct that might encourage you to so bold a declaration? I am shocked that you should venture to say so much, and blush that I should even dare to give it a hearing.—Let me be gone.

Sir J. Nay stay, madam, but one moment.—Your sensibility is too great.—Engagements! what engagements have been pretended on either side, more than those of family convenience? I went on in the trammels of a matrimonial negotiation, with a blind submission to your father and lord Ogleby; but my heart soon claimed a right to be consulted. It has devoted itself to you, and obliges me to plead earnestly for the same tender interest in yours.

Fan. Have a care, sir John! do not mistake a depraved will for a virtuous inclination. By these common pretences of the heart half our sex are made fools, and a greater part of yours despise them for it.

Sir J. Affection, you will allow, is involuntary. We cannot always direct it to the object on which it should fix—but when it is once inviolably attached, inviolably as mine is to you, it often creates reciprocal affection.—When I last urged you on this subject, you heard me with more temper, and I hoped with some compassion.

Fan. You deceived yourself. If I forbore to exert a proper spirit, nay if I did not even express the quickest resentment at your behaviour, it was only in consideration of that respect I wish to pay you in honour to my sister; and be assured, sir, woman as I am, that my vanity could reap no pleasure from a triumph that must result from the blackest treachery to her.

[*Going.*]

Sir J. One word, and I have done. [*Stops her*].—Your sister, I verily believe, neither entertains any real affection for me, or tenderness for you. Your father, I am inclined to think, is not much concerned by means of which of his daughters the families are united.—Now as they cannot, shall not be connected, otherwise than by my union with you, why will you, from a false delicacy, oppose a measure so conducive to my happiness, and, I hope, your own? I love you, most passionately and sincerely love you—and hope to propose terms agreeable to Mr. Sterling:—If then you don't absolutely loath, abhor, and scorn me—if there is no other happier man—

Fan. Hear me, sir; hear my final determination.—Were my father and sister as insensible as you are pleased to represent them;—were my heart for ever to remain disengaged to any other, I could not listen to your proposals.—What! you on the very eve of a marriage with my sister; I, living under the same roof with her, bound not only by the laws of friendship and hospitality, but even the ties of blood, to contribute to her happiness, and not to conspire against her peace, the peace of a whole family, and that of my own too!—Away, away, sir John!—At such a time, and in such circumstances, your addresses only inspire me with horror.—Nay, you must detain me no longer—I will go.

Sir J. Do not leave me in absolute despair!—Give me a glimpse of hope! [*Falls on his knees.*]

Fan. I cannot.—Pray, sir John!—

[*Struggles to go.*]

Sir J. Shall this hand be given to another? [*Kisses*]

her Hand] No, I cannot endure it.—My whole soul is yours, and the whole happiness of my life is in your power.

Re-enter MISS STERLING.

Fan. Ha! my sister is here. Rise, for shame, sir John.

Sir J. Miss Sterling!

[Rises.

Miss S. I beg pardon, sir! You'll excuse me, madam!—I have broke in upon you a little unopportunately, I believe—but I did not mean to interrupt you—I only came, sir, to let you know that breakfast waits, if you have finished your morning's devotions.

Sir J. I am very sensible, miss Sterling, that this may appear particular, but——

Miss S. O dear, sir John, don't put yourself to the trouble of an apology—the thing explains itself.

Sir J. It will soon, madam.—In the mean time, I can only assure you of my profound respect and esteem for you, and make no doubt of convincing Mr. Sterling of the honour and integrity of my intentions.—And—and—your humble servant, madam!

[Exit in confusion.

Miss S. Respect!—Insolence!—Esteem!—Very fine, truly!—And you, madam! my sweet, delicate, innocent, sentimental sister! will you convince my papa too of the integrity of your intentions?

Fan. Do not upbraid me, my dear sister! Indeed I don't deserve it. Believe me you can't be more offended at his behaviour than I am, and I am sure it cannot make you half so miserable.

Miss S. Make me miserable!—You are mightily deceived, madam; it gives me no sort of uneasiness, I assure you.—A base fellow!—As for you, miss, the pretended softness of your disposition, your artful good nature, never imposed upon me. I always knew you to be sly, and envious, and deceitful.

Fan. Indeed you wrong me.

Miss S. Oh, you are all goodness, to be sure!—Did not I find him on his knees before you? Did not I see him kiss your sweet hand? Did not I hear his pro-

testations? Was not I a witness of your dissembled modesty?—No, no, my dear! don't imagine that you can make a fool of your elder sister so easily.

Fan. Sir John I own is to blame; but I am above the thoughts of doing you the least injury.

Miss S. We shall try that, madam.—I hope, miss, you'll be able to give a better account to my papa and my aunt, for they shall both know of this matter, I promise you. [Exit.

Fan. How unhappy I am! my distresses multiply upon me.—Mr. Lovewell must now become acquainted with sir John's behaviour to me, and in a manner that may add to his uneasiness. My father, instead of being disposed by fortunate circumstances to forgive any transgressions, will be previously incensed against me. My sister and my aunt will become irreconcilably my enemies, and rejoice in my disgrace.—Yet, on all events, I am determined on a discovery. I dread it, and am resolved to hasten it. It is surrounded with more horrors every instant, as it appears every instant more necessary. [Exit.

ACT THE THIRD.



SCENE I. *A Hall.*

Enter a Servant, conducting in SERJEANT FLOWER, and COUNSELLORS TRAVERSE and TRUEMAN, all booted.

Serv. This way, if you please, gentlemen! my master is at breakfast with the family at present, but I'll let him know, and he will wait on you immediately.

Flow. Mighty well, young man, mighty well.

Serv. Please to favour me with your names, gentlemen.

Flow. Let Mr. Sterling know, that Mr. Sergeant Flower, and two other gentlemen of the bar, are come to wait on him according to his appointment.

Serv. I will, sir.

[*Going.*

Flow. And harkye, young man, [*Servant returns*] desire my servant—Mr. Sergeant Flower's servant, to bring in my green and gold saddle-cloth and pistols, and lay them down here in the hall, with my port-manteau.

Serv. I will, sir.

[*Exit.*

Flow. Well, gentlemen! the settling these marriage articles falls conveniently enough, almost just on the eve of the circuits.—Let me see—the Home, the Midland, and Western; ay, we can all cross the country well enough to our several destinations.—Traverse, when do you begin at Hertford?

Trav. The day after to-morrow.

Flow. That is commission-day with us at Warwick too; but my clerk has retainers for every cause in the paper, so it will be time enough if I am there next morning. Besides I've half a dozen cases that have lain by me ever since the spring assizes, and I must tack opinions to them before I see my country clients again; so I'll take the evening before me, and then *currente calamo*, as I say, eh, Traverse?

Trav. True; but pray, Mr. Sergeant, are you concerned in Jones and Thomas, at Lincoln?

Flow. I am—for the plaintiff.

Trav. And what do you think on't?

Flow. A nonsuit.

Trav. I thought so.

Flow. Oh, no matter of doubt on't—*luce clarius*—we have no right in us.—We have but one chance.

Trav. What's that?

Flow. Why, my lord chief does not go the circuit this time, and my brother Puzzle being in the commission, the cause will come on before him.

True. Ay, that may do indeed, if you can but throw dust in the eyes of the defendant's counsel.

Flow. True.—Mr. Trueman, I think you are concerned for lord Ogleby in this affair?

True. I am, sir—I have the honour to be related to his lordship, and hold some courts for him in Somersetshire—go the Western circuit—and attend the sessions at Exeter, merely because his lordship's interests and property lie in that part of the kingdom.

Flow. Ha!—and pray, Mr. Trueman, how long have you been called to the bar?

True. About nine years and three quarters.

Flow. Ha!—I don't know that I ever had the plea-

sure of seeing you before.—I wish you success, young gentleman!

Enter STERLING.

Ster. Oh, Mr. Sergeant Flower, I am glad to see you—your servant, Mr. Serjeant! gentlemen, your servant!—Well, are all matters concluded? Has that snail-paced conveyancer, old Ferret, of Gray's-inn, settled the articles at last? Do you approve of what he has done? Will his tackle hold, tight and strong?—Eh, master Sergeant?

Flow. My friend Ferret's slow and sure, sir—But then, *serus aut citius*, as we say, sooner or later, Mr. Sterling, he is sure to put his business out of hand as he should do.—My clerk has brought the writings, and all other instruments along with him; and the settlement is, I believe, as good a settlement as any settlement on the face of the earth!

Ster. But that d——n'd mortgage of sixty thousand pounds.—There don't appear to be any other incumbrances, I hope?

Trav. I can answer for that, sir—and that will be cleared off immediately on the payment of the first part of miss Sterling's portion.—You agree, on your part, to come down with eighty thousand pounds.

Ster. Down on the nail.—Ay, ay, my money is ready to-morrow if he pleases—he shall have it in India bonds, or notes, or how he chooses.—Your lords and your dukes, and your people at the court end of the town, stick at payments sometimes—debts unpaid, no credit lost with them—but no fear of us substantial fellows—Eh, Mr. Sergeant?

Flow. Sir John having last term, according to agreement, levied a fine and suffered a recovery, has hitherto cut off the entail of the Ogleby estate, for the better effecting the purposes of the present intended marriage; on which above-mentioned Ogleby estate, a jointure of two thousand pounds per annum is secured to your eldest daughter, now Elizabeth Sterling, spinster; and the whole estate, after the death of the

aforesaid earl, descends to the heirs male of sir John Melvil, on the body of the aforesaid Elizabeth Sterling lawfully to be begotten.

Trav. Very true—and sir John is to be put in immediate possession of as much of his lordship's Somersetshire estate, as lies in the manors of Hogmore and Cranford, amounting to between two and three thousand pounds per annum, and at the death of Mr. Sterling, a further sum of seventy thousand—

Enter SIR JOHN MELVIL.

Ster. Ah, sir John! Here we are—hard at it—paving the road to matrimony.—First the lawyers, then comes the doctor.—Let us but dispatch the long-robe, we shall soon get pudding-sleeves to work, I warrant you.

Sir J. I am sorry to interrupt you, sir—but I hope that both you and these gentlemen will excuse me.—Having something very particular for your private ear, I took the liberty of following you, and beg you will oblige me with an audience immediately. [*To Ster.*

Ster. Ay, with all my heart!—Gentlemen, Mr. Sergeant, you'll excuse it—business must be done, you know. The writings will keep cold till to-morrow morning.

Flow. I must be at Warwick, Mr. Sterling, the day after.

Ster. Nay, nay, I shan't part with you to-night, gentlemen, I promise you.—My house is very full, but I have beds for you all, beds for your servants, and stabling for all your horses.—Will you take a turn in the garden, and view some of my improvements before dinner? Or will you amuse yourselves on the green, with a game at bowls and a cool tankard?—My servants shall attend you.—Do you choose any other refreshment?—Call for what you please; do as you please; make yourselves quite at home, I beg of you.—Here, Thomas! Harry! William! wait on these gentlemen!—[*Follows the Lawyers out, bawling and talking, and then returns to Sir John*] And now, sir, I am

entirely at your service. What are your commands with me, sir John?

Sir J. After having carried the negotiation between our families to so great a length; after having assented so readily to all your proposals, as well as received so many instances of your cheerful compliance with the demands made on our part, I am extremely concerned, Mr. Sterling, to be the involuntary cause of any uneasiness.

Ster. Uneasiness! what uneasiness?—Where business is transacted as it ought to be, and the parties understand one another, there can be no uneasiness. You agree, on such and such conditions, to receive my daughter for a wife; on the same conditions I agree to receive you as a son-in-law; and as to all the rest, it follows of course, you know, as regularly as the payment of a bill after acceptance.

Sir J. Pardon me, sir, more uneasiness has arisen than you are aware of. I am myself, at this instant, in a state of inexpressible embarrassment; miss Sterling, I know, is extremely disconcerted too; and unless you will oblige me with the assistance of your friendship, I foresee the speedy progress of discontent and animosity through the whole family.

Ster. What the deuce is all this? I don't understand a single syllable.

Sir J. In one word, then—it will be absolutely impossible for me to fulfil my engagements in regard to miss Sterling.

Ster. How, sir John? Do you mean to put an affront upon my family? What! refuse to——

Sir J. Be assured, sir, that I neither mean to affront nor forsake your family. My only fear is, that you should desert me; for the whole happiness of my life depends on my being connected with your family, by the nearest and tenderest ties in the world.

Ster. Why, did not you tell me, but a moment ago, that it was absolutely impossible for you to marry my daughter?

Sir J. True.—But you have another daughter, sir—

Ster. Well!

Sir J. Who has obtained the most absolute dominion over my heart. I have already declared my passion to her; nay, miss Sterling herself is also apprised of it; and if you will but give a sanction to my present addresses, the uncommon merit of miss Sterling will no doubt recommend her to a person of equal, if not superior rank to myself, and our families may still be allied by my union with miss Fanny.

Ster. Mighty fine, truly! Why, what the plague do you make of us, sir John? Do you come to market for my daughter, like servants at a statute-fair? Do you think that I will suffer you, or any man in the world, to come into my house, like the grand seignior, and throw the handkerchief first to one, and then to t'other, just as he pleases? Do you think I drive a kind of African slave-trade with them, and——

Sir J. A moment's patience, sir! Nothing but the excess of my passion for miss Fanny should have induced me to take any step that had the least appearance of disrespect to any part of your family; and even now I am desirous to atone for my transgression, by making the most adequate compensation that lies in my power.

Ster. Compensation! what compensation can you possibly make in such a case as this, sir John?

Sir J. Come, come, Mr. Sterling, I know you to be a man of sense, a man of business, a man of the world. I'll deal frankly with you; and you shall see that I don't desire a change of measures for my own gratification, without endeavouring to make it advantageous to you.

Ster. What advantage can your inconstancy be to me, sir John?

Sir J. I'll tell you, sir.—You know that by the articles at present subsisting between us, on the day of my marriage with miss Sterling, you agree to pay down the gross sum of eighty thousand pounds.

Ster. Well!

Sir J. Now, if you will but consent to my waving that marriage——

Ster. I agree to your waving that marriage? Impossible, sir John!

Sir J. I hope not, sir; as, on my part, I will agree to wave my right to thirty thousand pounds of the fortune I was to receive with her.

Ster. Thirty thousand, d'ye say?

Sir J. Yes, sir; and accept of miss Fanny with fifty thousand, instead of fourscore.

Ster. Fifty thousand——

[Pausing.]

Sir J. Instead of fourscore.

Ster. Why—why—there may be something in that.——Let me see—Fanny with fifty thousand, instead of Betsy with fourscore.—But how can this be, sir John? for you know I am to pay this money into the hands of my lord Ogleby; who I believe, between you and me, sir John, is not overstocked with ready money at present; and threescore thousand of it, you know, is to go to pay off the present encumbrances on the estate, sir John.

Sir J. That objection is easily obviated.—Ten of the twenty thousand, which would remain as a surplus of the fourscore, after paying off the mortgage, was intended by his lordship for my use, that we might set off with some little eclat on our marriage; and the other ten for his own.—Ten thousand pounds therefore I shall be able to pay you immediately; and for the remaining twenty thousand, you shall have a mortgage on that part of the estate which is to be made over to me, with whatever security you shall require for the regular payment of the interest, till the principal is duly discharged.

Ster. Why—to do you justice, sir John, there is something fair and open in your proposal; and since I find you do not mean to put an affront upon the family——

Sir J. Nothing was ever further from my thoughts, Mr. Sterling.—And after all the whole affair is nothing

extraordinary—such things happen every day; and as the world has only heard generally of a treaty between the families, when this marriage takes place, nobody will be the wiser, if we have but discretion enough to keep our own counsel.

Ster. True, true; and since you only transfer from one girl to the other, it is no more than transferring so much stock, you know.

Sir J. The very thing!

Ster. Odso! I had quite forgot.—We are reckoning without our host here—there is another difficulty——

Sir J. You alarm me. What can that be?

Ster. I can't stir a step in this business without consulting my sister Heidelberg.—The family has very great expectations from her, and we must not give her any offence.

Sir J. But if you come into this measure, surely she will be so kind as to consent——

Ster. I don't know that, Betsy is her darling, and I can't tell how far she may resent any slight that seems to be offered to her favourite niece. However, I'll do the best I can for you. You shall go and break the matter to her first, and by that time I may suppose that your rhetoric has prevailed on her to listen to reason, I will step in to reinforce your arguments.

Sir J. I'll fly to her immediately—you promise me your assistance?

Ster. I do.

Sir J. Ten thousand thanks for it! And now, success attend me!

[*Going.*]

Ster. Harkye, sir John! [*Sir John returns*] Not a word of the thirty thousand to my sister, sir John.

Sir J. O, I am dumb, I am dumb, sir.

[*Going.*]

Ster. You'll remember it is thirty thousand?

Sir J. To be sure I do.

Ster. But, sir John! one thing more. [*Sir John returns*] My lord must know nothing of this stroke of friendship between us.

Sir J. Not for the world. Let me alone! let me alone!

[*Offering to go.*]

Ster. [*Holding him*] And when every thing is agreed, we must give each other a bond to be held fast to the bargain.

Sir J. To be sure. A bond, by all means! a bond, or whatever you please. [*Exit hastily:*

Ster. I should have thought of more conditions—he's in a humour to give me every thing—Why, what mere children are your fellows of quality, that cry for a plaything one minute and throw it by the next!—as changeable as the weather, and as uncertain as the stocks. Special fellows to drive a bargain! and yet they are to take care of the interest of the nation, truly! Here does this whirligig man of fashion offer to give up thirty thousand pounds in hard money, with as much indifference as if it was a china orange. By this mortgage, I shall have a hold on his terra firma; and if he wants more money, as he certainly will, let him have children by my daughter or no, I shall have his whole estate in a net for the benefit of my family.—Well, thus it is, that the children of citizens who have acquired fortunes, prove persons of fashion; and thus it is, that persons of fashion who have ruined their fortunes, reduce the next generation to cits. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *Another Apartment.*

Enter MRS. HEIDELBERG and MISS STERLING.

Miss S. This is your gentle-looking, soft-speaking, sweet-smiling, affable miss Fanny, for you!

Mrs. H. My miss Faunny! I disclaim her.—With all her arts, she never could insinuate herself into my good graces; and yet she has a way with her, that deceives man, woman, and child, except you and me, niece.

Miss S. O ay—she wants nothing but a crook in her hand, and a lamb under her arm, to be a perfect picture of innocence and simplicity.

Mrs. H. Just as I was drawn at Amsterdam, when I went over to visit my husband's relations.

Miss S. And then she's so mighty good to servants

—"Pray, John, do this—pray, Thomas, do that—thank you, Jenny"—and then so humble to her relations—"To be sure, papa—as my aunt pleases—my sister knows best."—But with all her demureness and humility, she has no objection to be lady Melvil, it seems, nor to any wickedness that can make her so.

Mrs. H. She lady Melvil! Compose yourself, niece! I'll ladyship her, indeed:—a little creppin, cantin—She shan't be the better for a farden of my money. But tell me, child, how does this intriguing with sir John correspond with her partiality to Lovewell? I don't see a concatenation here.

Miss S. There I was deceived, madam. I took all their whisperings and stealings into corners to be the mere attraction of vulgar minds; but, behold! their private meetings were not to contrive their own insipid happiness, but to conspire against mine. But I know whence proceeds Mr. Lovewell's resentment to me. I could not stoop to be familiar with my father's clerk, and so I have lost his interest.

Mrs. H. My spirit to a T.—My dear child! [*Kisses her*].—Mr. Heidelberg lost his election for member of parliament, because I would not demean myself to be slobbered about by drunken shoemakers, beastly cheesemongers, and tallow-chandlers. However, niece, I can't help differing a little in opinion from you in this matter. My experience and sagacity makes me still suspect that there is something more between her and that Lovewell, notwithstanding this affair of sir John. I had my eye upon them the whole time of breakfast. Sir John, I observed, looked a little confounded, indeed, though I knew nothing of what had passed in the garden. You seemed to sit upon thorns too: but Fanny and Mr. Lovewell made quite another-guess sort of a figur; and were as perfect a picture of two distressed lovers, as if it had been drawn by Raphael Angelo. As to sir John and Fanny, I want a matter of fact.

Miss S. Matter of fact, madam! Did not I come unexpectedly upon them? Was not sir John kneeling

at her feet, and kissing her hand? Did not he look all love, and she all confusion? Is not that matter of fact? and did not sir John, the moment that papa was called out of the room to the lawyer-men, get up from breakfast, and follow him immediately? And I warrant you that by this time he has made proposals to him to marry my sister—Oh, that some other person, an earl or a duke, would make his addresses to me, that I might be revenged on this monster!

Mrs. H. Be cool, child! you shall be lady Melvil, in spite of all their caballines, if it costs me ten thousand pounds to turn the scale. Sir John may apply to my brother indeed; but I'll make them all know who governs in this fammaly.

Miss S. As I live, madam, yonder comes sir John. A base man! I can't endure the sight of him. I'll leave the room this instant. *[Disordered.]*

Mrs. H. Poor thing! Well, retire to your own chamber, child; I'll give it him, I warrant you; and by-and-by I'll come and let you know all that has past between us.

Miss S. Pray do, madam.—*[Looking back]*—A vile wretch! *[Exit in a rage.]*

Enter SIR JOHN MELVIL.

Sir J. Your most obedient humble servant, madam.

[Bowing very respectfully.]

Mrs. H. Your servant, sir John.

[Dropping a half courtesy and pouting.]

Sir J. Miss Sterling's manner of quitting the room on my approach, and the visible coolness of your behaviour to me, madam, convince me that she has acquainted you with what passed this morning.

Mrs. H. I am very sorry, sir John, to be made acquainted with any thing that should induce me to change the opinion which I would always wish to entertain of a person of quality. *[Pouting.]*

Sir J. It has always been my ambition to merit the best opinion from Mrs. Heidelberg; and when she comes to weigh circumstances, I flatter myself—

Mrs. H. You do flatter yourself, if you imagine that I can approve of your behaviour to my niece, sir John. —And give me leave to tell you, sir John, that you have been drawn into an action much beneath you, sir John; and that I look upon every injury offered to miss Betty Sterling, as an affront to myself, sir John.

[*Warmly.*
Sir J. I would not offend you for the world, madam; but when I am influenced by a partiality for another, however ill-founded, I hope your discernment and good sense will think it rather a point of honour to renounce engagements which I could not fulfil so strictly as I ought; and that you will excuse the change in my inclinations, since the new object, as well as the first, has the honour of being your niece, madam.

Mrs. H. I disclaim her as a niece, sir John; miss Sterling disclaims her as a sister; and the whole family must disclaim her, for her monstrous baseness and treachery.

Sir J. Indeed she has been guilty of none, madam. Her hand and her heart are, I am sure, entirely at the disposal of yourself and Mr. Sterling. And if you should not oppose my inclinations, I am sure of Mr. Sterling's consent, madam.

Mrs. H. Indeed!

Sir J. Quite certain, madam.

Enter STERLING.

Sir. [*Behind*] So! they seem to be coming to terms already. I may venture to make my appearance.

Mrs. H. To marry Fanny?

[*Sterling advances by degrees.*

Sir J. Yes, madam.

Mrs. H. My brother has given his consent, you say?

Sir J. In the most ample manner, with no other restriction than the failure of your concurrence, madam. [*Sees Sterling*]—Oh, here's Mr. Sterling, who will confirm what I have told you.

Mrs. H. What! have you consented to give up your eldest daughter in this manner, brother?

Ster. Give her up, heaven forbid! no, not give her up, sister; only in case that you—Zounds, I am afraid you have said too much, sir John. [*Apart to Sir J.*

Mrs. H. Yes, yes; I see now that it is true enough what my niece told me. You are all plottin and caballin against her. Pray, does lord Ogleby know of this affair?

Sir J. I have not yet made him acquainted with it, madam.

Mrs. H. No, I warrant you. I thought so.—And so his lordship and myself, truly, are not to be consulted till the last.

Ster. What! did not you consult my lord? Oh, fie for shame, sir John!

Sir J. Nay, but Mr. Sterling—

Mrs. H. We, who are the persons of most consequence and experunce in the two fammalies, are to know nothing of the matter, till the whole is as good as concluded upon. But his lordship, I am sure, will have more generosaty than to countenance such a perceding. And I could not have expected such behaviour from a person of your qualaty, sir John.—And as for you, brother—

Ster. Nay, nay, but hear me, sister.

Mrs. H. I am perfectly ashamed of you.—Have you no spurrit? no more concern for the honour of our fammaly then to consent—

Ster. Consent! I consent! As I hope for mercy, I never gave my consent.—Did I consent, sir John?

Sir J. Not absolutely, without Mrs. Heidelberg's concurrence. But in case of her approbation—

Ster. Ay, in case I grant you, that is, if my sister approved—But that's quite another thing, you know—

[*To Mrs. Heidelberg.*

Mrs. H. Your sister approve, indeed!—I thought you knew her better, brother Sterling!—What I approve of having your eldest daughter returned upon your hands, and exchanged for the younger?—I am surprised how you could listen to such a scandalous proposal.

Ster. I tell you, I never did listen to it.—Did not I say, that I would be entirely governed by my sister, sir John?—And unless she agreed to your marrying Fanny—

Mrs. H. I agree to his marrying Fanny!—abominable!—The man is absolutely out of his senses.—Can't that wise head of yours foresee the consequence of all this, brother Sterling? Will sir John take Fanny without a fortune?—No!—After you have settled the largest part of your property on your youngest daughter, can there be an equal portion left for the eldest?—No!—Does not this overturn the whole system of the family?—Yes, yes, yes!

Ster. Do you see now what you've done?—Don't betray me, sir John.

[*Apart to Sir John.*]

Mrs. H. You know I was always for my niece Betsy's marrying a person of the very first quality. That was my maxim:—and, therefore, much the largest settlement was of course to be made upon her. As for Fanny, if she could, with a fortune of twenty or thirty thousand pounds, get a knight, or a member of parliament, or a rich common council-man, for a husband, I thought it might do very well.

Sir J. But if a better match should offer itself, why should it not be accepted, madam?

Mrs. H. What, at the expense of her elder sister?—O fie, sir John!—How could you bear to hear such an indignity, brother Sterling?

Ster. I! Nay, I sha'n't hear of it, I promise you.—I can't hear of it indeed, sir John.

Mrs. H. But you have heard of it, brother Sterling—You know you have, and sent sir John to propose it to me. But if you can give up your daughter, I sha'n't forsake my niece, I assure you.—Ah, if my poor dear Mr. Heidelberg, and our sweet babes had been alive, he would not have behaved so.

Ster. Did I, sir John?—Nay, speak!—Bring me off, or we are ruined.

[*Apart to Sir John.*]

Sir J. Why to be sure, to speak the truth—

Mrs. H. To speak the truth!—To speak the truth,

I'm ashamed of you both.—But have a care what you are about, brother! have a care, I say.—The counsellors are in the house, I hear; and if every thing is not settled to my liking, I'll have nothing more to say to you, if I live these hundred years—I'll go over to Holland, and settle with Mr. Vandersprucken, my poor husband's first cousin, and my own family shall never be the better for a farden of my money, I promise you. [Exit.

Ster. I thought so. I knew she never would agree to it.

Sir J. 'Sdeath, how unfortunate! What can we do, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. Nothing.

Sir J. What, must our agreement break off the moment it is made, then?

Ster. It can't be helped, sir John.—The family, as I told you before, have great expectations from my sister; and if this matter proceeds, you hear yourself that she threatens to leave us.—My brother Heidelberg was a warm man—a very warm man; and died worth a plum at least:—a plum! ay, I warrant you, he died worth a plum and a half.

Sir J. Well; but if I——

Ster. And then, my sister has three or four very good mortgages, a deal of money in the three per cents. and old South Sea annuities, besides large concerns in the Dutch and French funds. The greatest part of all this she means to leave to our family.

Sir J. I can only say, sir——

Ster. Why, your offer of the difference of thirty thousand was very fair and handsome, to be sure, sir John.

Sir J. Nay, but I am willing to——

Ster. Ay, but if I was to accept it against her will, I might lose above a hundred thousand; so you see the balance is against you, sir John.

Sir J. Suppose I was to prevail on lord Ogleby to apply to her, do you think that would have any influence over her?

Ster. I think he would be more likely to persuade her to it than any other person in the family. She has a great respect for lord Ogleby. She loves a lord.

Sir J. I'll apply to him this very day.—And if he should prevail on Mrs. Heidelberg, I may depend on your friendship, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. Ay, ay, I shall be glad to oblige you, when it is in my power; but as the account stands now, you see it is not upon the figures. And so your servant, sir John.

[*Excunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.



SCENE I. *A Room.*

Enter MR. STERLING, MRS. HEIDELBERG, and MISS STERLING.

Ster. What! will you send Fanny to town, sister?

Mrs. H. To-morrow morning. I've given orders about it already.

Ster. Indeed!

Mrs. H. Positively.

Ster. But consider, sister, at such a time as this, what an odd appearance it will have.

Mrs. H. Not half so odd as her behaviour, brother. —This time was intended for happiness, and I'll keep no incendiaries here to destroy it. I insist on her going off to-morrow morning.

Ster. I'm afraid this is all your doing, Betsy?

Miss S. No indeed, papa. My aunt knows that it is not.—For all Fanny's baseness to me, I am sure I would not do or say any thing to hurt her with you or my aunt for the world.

Mrs. H. Hold your tongue, Betsy; I will have my

way.—When she is packed off, every thing will go on as it should do.—Since they are at their intrigues, I'll let them see that we can act with vigor on our part; and the sending her out of the way, shall be the preliminary step to all the rest of my proceedings.

Ster. Well, but sister—

Mrs. H. It does not signify talking, brother Sterling, for I'm resolved to be rid of her, and I will.—Come along, child. [*To Miss Sterling*] The post-chay shall be at the door by six o'clock in the morning; and if miss Fanny does not get into it, why I will—and so there's an end of the matter. [*Bounces out with Miss Sterling; then returns*] One word more, brother Sterling—I expect that you will take your eldest daughter in your hand, and make a formal complaint to lord Ogleby, of sir John Melvil's behaviour.—Do this, brother;—show a proper regard for the honour of your family yourself, and I shall throw in my mite to the raising of it. If not—but now you know my mind. So act as you please, and take the consequences.

[*Exit.*]

Ster. The devil's in the women for tyranny!—Mothers, wives, mistresses, or sisters, they always will govern us.—As to my sister Heidelberg, she knows the strength of her purse, and domineers upon the credit of it.—“I will do this,” and “you shall do that,” and “you shall do t'other—or else the family shan't have a farden of”—[*Mimicking*]—So absolute with her money!—But, to say the truth, nothing but money can make us absolute, and so we must e'en make the best of her.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II. *The Garden.*

Enter LORD OGLEBY and CANTON.

Lord O. What! Mademoiselle Fanny to be sent away?—Why?—Wherefore?—What's the meaning of all this?

Can. Je ne sçais pas—I know nothing.

Lord O. It can't be—it shan't be:—I protest against

the measure. She's a fine girl, and I had much rather that the rest of the family were annihilated, than that she should leave us.—Her vulgar father, that's the very abstract of 'Change-alley—the aunt, that's always endeavouring to be a fine lady—and the pert sister, for ever showing that she is one, are horrid company indeed, and without her would be intolerable. Ah, la petite Fanchon! she's the thing: isn't she, Canton?

Can. Dere is very good sympatie entre vous and dat young lady, my lor.

Lord O. I'll not be left among these Goths and Vandals, your Sterlings, your Heidelbergs, and Devilbergs—if she goes, I'll positively go too.

Can. In de same post-chay, my lor? You have no objection to dat, I believe, nor mademoiselle neither too—ha, ha, ha!

Lord O. Pr'ythee hold thy foolish tongue, Cant. Does thy Swiss stupidity imagine that I can see and talk with a fine girl without desires?—My eyes are involuntarily attracted by beautiful objects—I fly as naturally to a fine girl—

Can. As de fine girl to you, my lor, ha, ha, ha! you alway fly togedre like un pair de pigeons—

Lord O. Like un pair de pigeons—[Mocks him]—Vous etes un sot, monsieur Canton—Thou art always dreaming of my intrigues, and never seest me badiner but you suspect mischief, you old fool you.

Can. I am fool, I confess, but not always fool in dat, my lor, he, he, he!

Lord O. He, he, he!—Thou art incorrigible, but thy absurdities amuse one. Thou art like my rappee here, [Takes out his Box] a most ridiculous superfluity; but a pinch of thee now and then is a more delicious treat.

Can. You do me great honeur, mi lor.

Lord O. 'Tis fact, upon my soul. Thou art properly my cephalic snuff, and art no bad medicine against megrims, vertigoes, and profound thinking—ha, ha, ha!

Can. Your flatterie, my lor, vil make me too prode.

Lord O. The girl has some little partiality for me, to be sure: but pr'ythee, Cant. is not that miss Fanny yonder?

Can. [*Looks with a Glass*] Ah—la voila! En verité, 'tis she, mi lor——'tis one of de pigeons——de pigeons d'amour.

Lord O. Don't be ridiculous, you old monkey.

[*Smiles.*]

Can. I am monkee, I am ole; but I have eye, I have ear, and a little understand, now and den.

Lord O. Taisez vous bête!

Can. Elle vous attend, my lor.—She vil make a love to you.

Lord O. Will she? Have at her then! A fine girl can't oblige me more——'Egad, I find myself a little enjoué——Come along, Cant.! she is but in the next walk——but there is such a deal of this d—ned crinkum-crankum, as Sterling calls it, that one sees people for half an hour before one can get to them——Allons, monsieur Canton, allons, donc!

[*Exeunt, singing in French.*]

SCENE III. *Another Part of the Garden.*

Enter LOVEWELL and FANNY.

Love. My dear Fanny, I cannot bear your distress! it overcomes all my resolutions, and I am prepared for the discovery.

Fan. But how can it be effected before my departure?

Love. I'll tell you.—Lord Ogleby seems to entertain a visible partiality for you; and notwithstanding the peculiarities of his behaviour, I am sure that he is humane at the bottom. He is vain to an excess; but withal extremely good-natured, and would do any thing to recommend himself to a lady.—Do you open the whole affair of our marriage to him immediately. It will come with more irresistible persuasion from you than from myself; and I doubt not but you'll gain his friendship and protection at once. His influence and

authority will put an end to sir John's solicitations, remove your aunt's and sister's unkindness and suspicions, and, I hope, reconcile your father and the whole family to our marriage.

Fan. Heaven grant it! Where is my lord?

Love. I have heard him and Canton, since dinner, singing French songs under the great walnut-tree by the parlour door. If you meet with him in the garden, you may disclose the whole immediately. To-morrow morning is fixed for your departure, and if we lose this opportunity, we may wish in vain for another.—He approaches—I must retire.—Speak, my dear Fanny, speak, and make us happy! [Exit.]

Fan. What shall I do? What shall I say to him? I am all confusion.

Enter LORD OGLEBY and CANTON.

Lord O. To see so much beauty so solitary, madam, is a satire upon mankind, and 'tis fortunate that one man has broke in upon your reverie for the credit of our sex. I say one, madam; for poor Canton here, from age and infirmities, stands for nothing.

Can. Noting at all, indeed.

Fan. Your lordship does me great honour.—I had a favour to request, my lord!

Lord O. A favour, madam?—To be honoured with your commands is an inexpressible favour done to me, madam.

Fan. If your lordship could indulge me with the honour of a moment's—What's the matter with me?

[*Aside.*]

Lord O. The girl's confused—Ho!—here's something in the wind, faith—I'll have a tête-à-tête with her.

[*Aside*]—Allez vous en! [*To Canton.*]

Can. I go—Ah, pauvre mademoiselle! My lor, have pitié upon the poor pigeone! [*Apart to Lord O.*]

Lord O. I'll knock you down, Cant. [*Smiles.*]

Can. Den I go—[*Shuffles along*]—You are mosh please, for all dat. [*Aside, and exit.*]

Fan. I shall sink with apprehension. [*Aside.*]

Lord O. What a sweet girl!—she's a civilized being, and atones for the barbarism of the rest of the family. *[Aside.*

Fan. My lord! I— *[Courtesies and blushes.*

Lord O. I look upon it, madam, to be one of the luckiest circumstances of my life, that I have this moment the honour of receiving your commands, and the satisfaction of confirming with my tongue what my eyes perhaps have but too weakly expressed—that I am literally the humblest of your servants.

Fan. I think myself greatly honoured by your lordship's partiality to me; but it distresses me that I am obliged, in my present situation, to apply to it for protection.

Lord O. I am happy in your distress, madam, because it gives me an opportunity to show my zeal.—Beauty to me is a religion in which I was born and bred a bigot, and would die a martyr.—I'm in tolerable spirits, faith! *[Aside.*

Fan. There is not, perhaps, at this moment, a more distressed creature than myself. Affection, duty, hope, despair, and a thousand different sentiments are struggling in my bosom; and even the presence of your lordship, to whom I have flown for protection, adds to my perplexity.

Lord O. Does it, madam?—Venus forbid!—My old fault; the devil's in me, I think, for perplexing young women. *[Aside, and smiling]* Take courage, madam! dear miss Fanny, explain.—You have a powerful advocate in my breast, I assure you—My heart, madam—I am attached to you by all the laws of sympathy and delicacy.—By my honour, I am.

Fan. Then I will venture to unburden my mind—Sir John Melvil, my lord, by the most misplaced and mistimed declaration of affection for me, has made me the unhappiest of women.

Lord O. How, madam? Has sir John made his addresses to you?

Fan. He has, my lord, in the strongest terms. But I hope it is needless to say that my duty to my father,

love to my sister, and regard to the whole family, as well as the great respect I entertain for your lordship, [*Courtesies*] made me shudder at his addresses.

Lord O. Charming girl!—Proceed, my dear miss Fanny, proceed!

Fan. In a moment——give me leave, my lord!——But if what I have to disclose should be received with anger or displeasure——

Lord O. Impossible, by all the tender powers!—Speak, I beseech you, or I shall divine the cause before you utter it.

Fan. Then, my lord, sir John's addresses are not only shocking to me in themselves, but are more particularly disagreeable to me at this time—as—as——

[*Hesitates.*]

Lord O. As what, madam?

Fan. As—pardon my confusion—I am entirely devoted to another.

Lord O. If this is not plain, the devil's in it. [*Aside*]——But tell me, my dear miss Fanny, for I must know; tell me the how, the when, and the where——Tell me——

Re-enter CANTON, hastily.

Can. My lor, my lor, my lor!

Lord O. D—n your Swiss impertinence! how durst you interrupt me in the most critical, melting moment that ever love and beauty honoured me with?

Can. I demande pardonne, my lor! Sir John Melvil, my lor, sent me to beg you do him de honeur to speak a little to you, my lor.

Lord O. I'm not at leisure—I am busy—Get away, you stupid old dog, you Swiss rascal, or I'll——

Can. Fort bien, my lor. [*Goes out on Tiptoe.*]

Lord O. By the laws of gallantry, madam, this interruption should be death; but as no punishment ought to disturb the triumph of the softer passions, the criminal is pardoned and dismissed. Let us return, madam, to the highest luxury of exalted minds—a declaration of love from the lips of beauty.

Fan. The entrance of a third person has a little relieved me, but I cannot go through with it; and yet I must open my heart with a discovery, or it will break with its burden.

[*Aside.*

Lord O. What passion in her eyes! I am alarmed to agitation. [*Aside*] I presume, madam (and as you have flattered me, by making me a party concerned, I hope you'll excuse the presumption), that——

Fan. Do you excuse my making you a party concerned, my lord, and let me interest your heart in my behalf, as my future happiness or misery in a great measure depend——

Lord O. Upon me, madam?

Fan. Upon you, my lord.

[*Sighs.*

Lord O. There's no standing this: I have caught the infection—her tenderness dissolves me.

[*Sighs.*

Fan. And should you too severely judge of a rash action which passion prompted, and modesty has long concealed——

Lord O. [*Takes her Hand*] Thou amiable creature, command my heart, for it is vanquished. Speak but thy virtuous wishes, and enjoy them.

Fan. I cannot, my lord; indeed I cannot. Mr. Lovewell must tell you my distresses; and when you know them, pity and protect me.

[*Exit in Tears.*

Lord O. How the devil could I bring her to this? It—it is too much—too much—I can't bear it—I must give way to this amiable weakness. [*Wipes his Eyes*] My heart overflows with sympathy, and I feel every tenderness I have inspired. [*Stifles a Tear*] Can I be a man, and withstand it? No—I'll sacrifice the whole sex to her. But here comes the father, quite apropos. I'll open the matter immediately, settle the business with him, and take the sweet girl down to Ogleby-house to-morrow morning. But what the devil! Miss Sterling too! What mischief's in the wind now? No conquest there—no, no, that would be too much desolation in the family.

Enter STERLING and Miss STERLING.

Ster. My lord, your servant! I am attending my daughter here upon rather a disagreeable affair. Speak to his lordship, Betsy.

Lord O. Your eyes, miss Sterling, for I always read the eyes of a young lady, betray some little emotion. What are your commands, madam?

Miss S. I have but too much cause for my emotion, my lord!

Lord O. I cannot commend my kinsman's behaviour, madam. He has behaved like a false knight, I must confess. I have heard of his apostasy. Miss Fanny has informed me of it.

Miss S. Miss Fanny's baseness has been the cause of sir John's inconstancy.

Lord O. Nay, now, my dear miss Sterling, your passion transports you too far. Sir John may have entertained a passion for miss Fanny, but believe me, my dear miss Sterling, believe me, miss Fanny has no passion for sir John. She has a passion, indeed, a most tender passion. She has opened her whole soul to me, and I know where her affections are placed.

[Conceitedly.]

Miss S. Not upon Mr. Lovewell, my lord.

Lord O. Lovewell! No, poor lad! she does not think of him. *[Smiles]* I know better: however, a little time will solve all mysteries.

Miss S. Have a care, my lord, that both the families are not made the dupes of sir John's artifice, and my sister's dissimulation! You don't know her; indeed, my lord, you don't know her; a base, insinuating, perfidious!—It is too much—She has been beforehand with me, I perceive, endeavouring to prejudice your lordship in her favour; and I am to be laughed at by every body. Such unnatural behaviour to me! But since I see I can have no redress, I am resolved that some way or other I will have revenge.

[Exit.]

Ster. This is foolish work, my lord!

Lord O. I have too much sensibility to bear the tears of beauty.

Ster. It is touching indeed, my lord; and very moving for a father.

Lord O. To be sure, sir! You, with your exquisite feelings, must be distressed beyond measure! Wherefore, to divert your too exquisite feeling, suppose we change the subject, and proceed to business.

Ster. With all my heart, my lord.

Lord O. You see, Mr. Sterling, we can make no union in our families by the proposed marriage.

Ster. And I am very sorry to see it, my lord.

Lord O. Have you set your heart upon being allied to our house, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. 'Tis my only wish at present, my omnium, as I may call it.

Lord O. Your wishes shall be fulfilled.

Ster. Shall they, my lord? but how—how?

Lord O. I'll marry in your family.

Ster. What! my sister Heidelberg?

Lord O. You throw me into a cold sweat, Mr. Sterling. No, not your sister, but your daughter.

Ster. My daughter?

Lord O. Fanny!—now the murder's out!

Ster. What you, my lord?

Lord O. Yes, I, I, Mr. Sterling.

Ster. No, no, my lord; that's too much. [Smiles.]

Lord O. Too much! I don't comprehend you.

Ster. What you, my lord, marry my Fanny? Bless me! what will the folks say?

Lord O. Why, what will they say?

Ster. That you're a bold man, my lord; that's all.

Lord O. Mr. Sterling, this may be city wit, for aught I know. Do you court my alliance?

Ster. To be sure, my lord.

Lord O. Then I'll explain—My nephew won't marry your eldest daughter, nor I neither.—Your youngest daughter won't marry him; I will marry your youngest daughter.

- *Ster.* What! with a youngest daughter's fortune, my lord?

Lord O. With any fortune, or no fortune at all, sir. Love is the idol of my heart, and the demon interest sinks before him. So, sir, as I said before, I will marry your youngest daughter; your youngest daughter will marry me.

Ster. Who told you so, my lord?

Lord O. Her own sweet self, sir.

Ster. Indeed!

Lord O. Yes, sir; our affection is mutual; your advantage double and treble; your daughter will be a countess directly—I shall be the happiest of beings, and you'll be father to an earl instead of a baronet.

Ster. But what will my sister say? and my daughter?

Lord O. I'll manage that matter; nay, if they won't consent, I'll run away with your daughter in spite of you.

Ster. Well said, my lord! your spirit's good; I wish you had my constitution; but if you'll venture, I have no objection, if my sister has none.

Lord O. I'll answer for your sister, sir. Apropos, the lawyers are in the house. I'll have articles drawn, and the whole affair concluded to-morrow morning.

Ster. Very well! and I'll dispatch Lovewell to London immediately for some fresh papers I shall want; you must excuse me, my lord, but I can't help laughing at the match.—He, he, he! what will the folks say?

[*Erit.*

Lord O. What a fellow am I going to make a father of! He has no more feeling than the post in his warehouse—But Fanny's virtues tune me to rapture again, and I won't think of the rest of the family.

Re-enter LOVEWELL, hastily.

Love. I beg your lordship's pardon; are you alone, my lord?

Lord O. No, my lord, I am not alone; I am in company, the best company.

Love. My lord!

Lord O. I never was in such exquisite, enchanting company since my heart first conceived, or my senses tasted, pleasure.

Love. Where are they, my lord? [Looks about.

Lord O. In my mind, Horatio.

Love. What company have you there, my lord?

[Smiles.

Lord O. My own ideas, sir, which so crowd upon my imagination, and kindle in it such a delirium of ecstasy, that wit, wine, music, poetry, all combined, and each in perfection, are but mere mortal shadows of my felicity.

Love. I see that your lordship is happy, and I rejoice at it.

Lord O. You shall rejoice at it, sir; my felicity shall not selfishly be confined, but shall spread its influence to the whole circle of my friends. I need not say, Lovewell, that you shall have your share of it.

Love. Shall I, my lord?—then I understand you; you have heard; miss Fanny has informed you——

Lord O. She has; I have heard, and she shall be happy; 'tis determined.

Love. Then I have reached the summit of my wishes. And will your lordship pardon the folly?

Lord O. O yes, poor creature, how could she help it? 'Twas unavoidable—fate and necessity.

Love. It was indeed, my lord. Your kindness distracts me.

Lord O. And so it did the poor girl, faith.

Love. She trembled to disclose the secret, and declare her affections?

Lord O. The world, I believe, will not think her affections ill placed.

Love. [Bows] You are too good, my lord.—And do you really excuse the rashness of the action?

Lord O. From my very soul, Lovewell.

Love. [Bows] I was afraid of her meeting with a cold reception.

Lord O. More fool you then.

Who pleads her cause with never failing beauty,
Here finds a full redress. [*Strikes his Breast.*
She's a fine girl, Lovewell.

Love. Her beauty, my lord, is her least merit. She has an understanding——

Lord O. Her choice convinces me of that.

Love. [*Bows*] That's your lordship's goodness. Her choice was a disinterested one.

Lord O. No, no, not altogether; it began with interest, and ended in passion.

Love. Indeed, my lord, if you were acquainted with her goodness of heart, and generosity of mind, as well as you are with the inferior beauties of her face and person——

Lord O. I am so perfectly convinced of their existence, and so totally of your mind, touching every amiable particular of that sweet girl, that were it not for the cold, unfeeling impediments of the law, I would marry her to-morrow morning.

Love. My lord!

Lord O. I would, by all that's honourable in man, and amiable in woman.

Love. Marry her!——Who do you mean, my lord?

Lord O. Miss Fanny Sterling that is; the countess of Ogleby that shall be.

Love. I am astonished!

Lord O. Why, could you expect less from me?

Love. I did not expect this, my lord.

Lord O. Trade and accounts have destroyed your feeling.

Love. No indeed, my lord. [*Sighs.*

Lord O. The moment that love and pity entered my breast, I was resolved to plunge into matrimony, and shorten the girl's tortures—I never do any thing by halves, do I, Lovewell?

Love. No indeed, my lord. [*Sighs*] What an accident! [*Aside.*

Lord O. What's the matter, Lovewell? thou seem'st to have lost thy faculties. Why don't you wish me joy, man?

Love. O, I do, my lord.

[*Sighs.*]

Lord O. She said that you would explain what she had not power to utter; but I wanted no interpreter for the language of love.

Love. But has your lordship considered the consequences of your resolution?

Lord O. No, sir, I am above consideration, when my desires are kindled.

Love. But consider the consequences, my lord, to your nephew, sir John.

Lord O. Sir John has considered no consequences himself, Mr. Lovewell.

Love. Mr. Sterling, my lord, will certainly refuse his daughter to sir John.

Lord O. Sir John has already refused Mr. Sterling's daughter.

Love. But what will become of miss Sterling, my lord?

Lord O. What's that to you?—You may have her, if you will. I depend upon Mr. Sterling's city philosophy to be reconciled to lord Ogleby's being his son-in-law, instead of sir John Melvil, baronet. Don't you think that your master may be brought to that, without having recourse to his calculations, eh, Lovewell?

Love. But, my lord, that is not the question.

Lord O. Whatever is the question, I'll tell you my answer.—I am in love with a fine girl, whom I resolve to marry.

Enter SIR JOHN MELVIL.

What news with you, sir John?—You look all hurry and impatience—like a messenger after a battle.

Sir J. After a battle indeed, my lord. I have this day had a severe engagement; and wanting your lordship as an auxiliary, I have at last mustered up resolution to declare what my duty to you and to myself have demanded from me some time.

Lord O. To the business then, and be as concise as possible, for I am upon the wing—eh, Lovewell?

[*Smiles, and Lovewell bows.*]

Sir J. I find 'tis in vain, my lord, to struggle against the force of inclination.

Lord O. Very true, nephew; I am your witness, and will second the motion—shan't I, Lovewell?

[Smiles, and Lovewell bows.]

Sir J. Your lordship's generosity encourages me to tell you that I cannot marry miss Sterling.

Lord O. I am not at all surprised at it—she's a bitter potion, that's the truth of it; but as you were to swallow it, and not I, it was your business, and not mine.—Any thing more?

Sir J. But this, my lord; that I may be permitted to make my addresses to the other sister.

Lord O. O yes, by all means—have you any hopes there, nephew?—Do you think he'll succeed, Lovewell?

[Smiles and winks at Lovewell.]

Love. I think not, my lord. [Gravely.]

Lord O. I think so too; but let the fool try.

Sir J. Will your lordship favour me with your good offices to remove the chief obstacle to the match, the repugnance of Mrs. Heidelberg?

Lord O. Mrs. Heidelberg?—Had not you better begin with the young lady first? It will save you a great deal of trouble, won't it, Lovewell? [Smiles] But do what you please, it will be the same thing to me: won't it, Lovewell? [Conceitedly] Why don't you laugh at him?

Love. I do, my lord. [Forces a smile.]

Sir J. And your lordship will endeavour to prevail on Mrs. Heidelberg to consent to my marriage with miss Fanny?

Lord O. I'll speak to Mrs. Heidelberg about the adorable Fanny as soon as possible.

Sir J. Your generosity transports me.

Lord O. Poor fellow, what a dupe! he little thinks who's in possession of the town. [Aside.]

Sir J. And your lordship is not in the least offended at this seeming inconstancy?

Lord O. Not in the least. Miss Fanny's charms will even excuse infidelity. I look upon women as the seræ

nature—lawful game—and every man who is qualified, has a natural right to pursue them;—Lovewell as well as you, and you as well as he, and I as well as either of you.—Every man shall do his best, without offence to any—what say you, kinsmen?

Sir J. You have made me happy, my lord.

Love. And me, I assure you, my lord.

Lord O. And I am superlatively so—allons donc! To horse and away, boys!—you to your affairs, and I to mine—suivons l'amour. [*Sings. Exeunt severally.*]

ACT THE FIFTH.



SCENE I. FANNY'S Apartment.

Enter LOVEWELL and FANNY, followed by BETTY.

Fan. Why did you come so soon, Mr. Lovewell? the family is not yet in bed, and Betty certainly heard somebody listening near the chamber-door.

Bet. My mistress is right, sir! evil spirits are abroad; and I am sure! you are both too good, not to expect mischief from them.

Love. But who can be so curious, or so wicked?

Bet. I think we have wickedness and curiosity enough in this family, sir, to expect the worst.

Fan. I do expect the worst.—Pr'ythee, Betty, return to the outward door, and listen if you hear any body in the gallery; and let us know directly.

Bet. I warrant you, madam—the Lord bless you both! [Exit.]

Fan. What did my father want with you this evening?

Love. He gave me the key of his closet, with orders

to bring from London some papers relating to lord Ogleby.

Fan. And why did you not obey him?

Love. Because I am certain that his lordship has opened his heart to him about you, and those papers are wanted merely on that account—But as we shall discover all to-morrow, there will be no occasion for them, and it would be idle in me to go.

Fan. Hark!—hark! bless me, how I tremble!—I feel the terrors of guilt—Indeed, Mr. Lovewell, this is too much for me—this situation may have very unhappy consequences. [Weeps.]

Love. But it shan't.—I would rather tell our story this moment to all the house, and run the risk of maintaining you by the hardest labour, than suffer you to remain in this dangerous perplexity.—What! shall I sacrifice all my best hopes and affections, in your dear health and safety, for the mean, and in such case the meanest consideration—of our fortune?—Were we to be abandoned by all our relations, we have that in our hearts and minds will weigh against the most affluent circumstances. I should not have proposed the secrecy of our marriage, but for your sake; and with hopes that the most generous sacrifice, you have made to love and me, might be less injurious to you, by waiting a lucky moment of reconciliation.

Fan. Hush! hush! for heaven's sake, my dear Lovewell; don't be so warm! your generosity gets the better of your prudence; you will be heard, and we shall be discovered.—I am 'satisfied—indeed I am.—Excuse this weakness, this delicacy, this what you will.—My mind's at peace—indeed it is—think no more of it, if you love me!

Love. That one word has charmed me, as it always does, to the most implicit obedience: it would be the worst of ingratitude in me to distress you a moment.

[Kisses her.]

Re-enter BETTY.

Bet. [In a low Voice] I'm sorry to disturb you.

Fan. Ha! what's the matter?

Love. Have you heard any body?

Bet. Yes, yes, I have; and they have heard you too, or I'm mistaken—if they had seen you too, we should have been in a fine quandary.

Fan. Pr'ythee don't prate now, Betty!

Love. What did you hear?

Bet. I was preparing myself, as usual, to take me a little nap——

Love. A nap!

Bet. Yes, sir, a nap; for I watch much better so than wide awake; and when I had wrapped this handkerchief round my head, for fear of the ear-ache from the key-hole, I thought I heard a kind of a sort of a buzzing, which I first took for a gnat, and shook my head two or three times, and went so with my hand.

Fan. Well—well—and so——

Bet. And so, madam, when I heard Mr. Lovewell a little loud, I heard the buzzing louder too—and pulling off my handkerchief softly, I could hear this sort of noise——

[Makes an indistinct sort of noise, like speaking.]

Fan. Well, and what did they say?

Bet. O! I could not understand a word of what was said.

Love. The outward door is lock'd?

Bet. Yes; and I bolted it too, for fear of the worst.

Fan. Why did you? they must have heard you, if they were near.

Bet. And I did it on purpose, madam, and cough'd a little too, that they might not hear Mr. Lovewell's voice—when I was silent, they were silent, and so I came to tell you.

Fan. What shall we do?

Love. Fear nothing; we know the worst; it will only bring on our catastrophe a little too soon—but Betty might fancy this noise—she's in the conspiracy, and can make a man a mouse at any time.

Bet. I can distinguish a man from a mouse as well as my betters—I'm sorry you think so ill of me, sir.

Fan. He compliments you, don't be a fool!—Now you have set her tongue a running, she'll mutter for an hour. [*To Lovewell*] I'll go and hearken myself.

[*Exit.*

Bet. I'll turn my back upon no girl for sincerity and service.

[*Half aside, and muttering.*

Love. Thou art the first in the world for both; and I will reward you soon, Betty, for one and the other.

Bet. I am not mercenary neither—I can live on a little, with a good carreter.

Re-enter FANNY.

Fan. All seems quiet.—Suppose, my dear, you go to your own room—I shall be much easier then—and to-morrow we will be prepared for the discovery.

Bet. You may discover, if you please; but for my part, I shall still be secret. [*Half aside, and muttering.*

Love. Should I leave you now, if they still are upon the watch, we shall lose the advantage of our delay. Besides, we should consult upon to-morrow's business. Let Betty go to her own room, and lock the outward door after her; we can fasten this; and when she thinks all safe, she may return and let me out as usual.

Bet. Shall I, madam?

Fan. Do let me have my way to-night, and you shall command me ever after.

Love. I live only to oblige you, my sweet Fanny! I'll be gone this moment.

[*Going.*

Fan. Betty shall go first, and if they lay hold of her—

Bet. They'll have the wrong sow by the ear, I can tell them that.

[*Going hastily.*

Fan. Softly—softly—Betty! don't venture out, if you hear a noise. Softly, I beg of you! See, Mr. Lovewell, the effects of indiscretion!

Love. But love, Fanny, makes amends for all.

[*Exeunt softly.*

SCENE II. *A Gallery, which leads to several Bed-chambers. The Stage dark.*

Enter MISS STERLING, leading MRS. HEIDELBERG in a Night-cap.

Miss S. This way, dear madam, and then I'll tell you all.

Mrs. H. Nay but, niece—consider a little—don't drag me out this figure; let me put on my fly-cap!—If any of my lord's fammaly, or the counsellors at law should be stirring, I should be perdigus disconcerted.

Miss S. But, my dear madam, a moment is an age, in my situation. I am sure my sister has been plotting my disgrace and ruin in that chamber!—O! she's all craft and wickedness.

Mrs. H. Well, but softly, Betsy!—you are all in emotion—your mind is too much flustrated—you can neither eat, nor drink, nor take your natural rest—compose yourself, child; for if we are not as warisome as they are wicked, we shall disgrace ourselves and the whole fammaly.

Miss S. We are disgraced already, madam. Sir John Melvil has forsaken me; my lord cares for nobody but himself; or if any body, it is my sister: my father, for the sake of a better bargain, would marry me to a 'Change broker: so that if you, madam, don't continue my friend—if you forsake me—if I am to lose my best hopes and consolation—in your tenderness—and affections—I had better—at once—give up the matter—and let my sister enjoy—the fruits of her treachery—trample with scorn upon the rights of her elder sister—the will of the best of aunts—and the weakness of a too interested father.

[She pretends to be bursting into Tears during this speech.]

Mrs. H. Don't, Betsy—keep up your spurrit—I hate whimpering—I am your friend—depend upon me in every particular.—But be composed, and tell me what new mischief you have discovered.

Miss S. I had no desire to sleep, and would not

undress myself, knowing that my Machiavel sister would not rest till she had broke my heart:—I was so uneasy that I could not stay in my room, but when I thought that all the house was quiet, I sent my maid to discover what was going forward;—she immediately came back and told me, that they were in high consultation; that she had heard only, for it was in the dark, my sister's maid conduct sir John Melvil to her mistress, and then lock the door.

Mrs. H. And how did you conduct yourself in this dilemma?

Miss S. I returned with her, and could hear a man's voice, though nothing that they said distinctly; and you may depend upon it, that sir John is now in that room, that they have settled the matter, and will run away together before morning, if we don't prevent them.

Mrs. H. Why, the brazen slut! she has got her sister's husband (that is to be) lock'd up in her chamber! at night too!—I tremble at the thoughts!

Miss S. Hush, madam! I hear something!

Mrs. H. You frighten me—let me put on my fly-cap—I would not be seen in this figur for the world.

Miss S. 'Tis dark, madam; you can't be seen.

Mrs. H. I protest there's a candle coming, and a man too!

Miss S. Nothing but servants;—let us retire a moment!
[*They retire.*]

Enter BRUSH, half drunk, laying hold of the Chambermaid, who has a Candle in her Hand.

Cham. Be quiet, Mr. Brush; I shall drop down with terror!

Brush. But my sweet, and most amiable chambermaid, if you have no love, you may hearken to a little reason; that cannot possibly do your virtue any harm.

Cham. But you may do me harm, Mr. Brush, and a great deal of harm too;—pray let me go; I am ruined if they hear you; I tremble like an asp.

Brush. But they shan't hear us; and if you have a mind to be ruined, it shall be the making of your for-

tune, you little slut, you! therefore, I say it again, if you have no love, hear a little reason!

Cham. I wonder at your impudence, Mr. Brush, to use me in this manner; this is not the way to keep me company, I assure you. You are a town-rake, I see, and now you are a little in liquor you fear nothing.

Brush. Nothing, by heavens! but your frowns, most amiable chambermaid; I am a little electrified, that's the truth on't; I am not used to drink port, and your master's is so heady, that a pint of it oversets a claret drinker. Come now, my dear little spider-brusher!

Cham. Don't be rude! bless me!—I shall be ruined—what will become of me?

Brush. I'll take care of you, by all that's honourable.

Cham. You are a base man to use me so—I'll cry out, if you don't let me go. That is miss Sterling's chamber, that miss Fanny's, and that madam Heidelberg's.

Brush. We know all that. And that lord Ogleby's, and that my lady What-d'ye-call-'em's: I don't mind such folks when I'm sober, much less when I am whimsical—rather above that, too.

Cham. More shame for you, Mr. Brush!—you terrify me—you have no modesty.

Brush. O, but I have, my sweet spider-brusher—for instance, I reverence miss Fanny—she's a most delicious morsel, and fit for a prince.—With all my horrors of matrimony, I could marry her myself—but for her sister—

Miss S. [Within] There, there, madam, all in a story!

Cham. Bless me, Mr. Brush!—I heard something!

Brush. Rats, I suppose, that are gnawing the old timbers of this execrable old dungeon—If it was mine, I would pull it down, and fill your fine canal up with the rubbish; and then I should get rid of two d—n'd things at once.

Cham. Law! law! how you blaspheme!—we shall have the house upon our heads for it.

Brush. No, no, it will last our time—but, as I was saying, the eldest sister—Miss Jezebel—

Cham. Is a fine young lady, for all your evil tongue.

Brush. No—we have smoked her already; and unless she marries our old Swiss, she can have none of us.—No, no, she won't do—we are a little too nice.

Cham. You're a monstrous rake, Mr. Brush, and don't care what you say.

Brush. Why, for that matter, my dear, I am a little inclined to mischief; and if you don't have pity upon me, I will break open that door, and ravish Mrs. Heidelberg.

Mrs. H. [*Coming forward*] There's no bearing this—you profligate monster!

Cham. Ha! I am undone!

Brush. Zounds! here she is, by all that's monstrous. [*Runs off.*]

Miss S. A fine discourse you have had with that fellow.

Mrs. H. And a fine time of night it is to be here with that drunken monster!

Miss S. What have you to say for yourself?

Cham. I can say nothing—I'm so frightened, and so ashamed.—But indeed I am virtuous—I am virtuous, indeed.

Mrs. H. Well, well—don't tremble so; but tell us what you know of this horrible plot here.

Miss S. We'll forgive you, if you'll discover all.

Cham. Why, madam, don't let me betray my fellow-servants—I sha'n't sleep in my bed, if I do.

Mrs. H. Then you shall sleep somewhere else to-morrow night.

Cham. O dear! what shall I do?

Mrs. H. Tell us this moment, or I'll turn you out of doors directly.

Cham. Why our butler has been treating us below in his pantry—Mr. Brush forced us to make a kind of a holiday night of it.

Miss S. Holiday! for what?

Cham. Nay, I only made one.

Miss S. Well, well; but upon what account?

Cham. Because as how, madam, there was a change

in the family, they said—that his honour, sir John, was to marry miss Fanny instead of your ladyship.

Miss S. And so you make a holiday for that—Very fine!

Cham. I did not make it, ma'am.

Mrs. H. But do you know nothing of sir John's being to run away with miss Fanny to-night?

Cham. No indeed, ma'am.

Miss S. Nor of his being now locked up in my sister's chamber?

Cham. No, as I hope for mercy, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Well, I'll put an end to all this directly—do you run to my brother Sterling—

Cham. Now, ma'am?—'Tis so very late, ma'am—

Mrs. H. I don't care how late it is. Tell him there are thieves in the house—that the house is on fire—tell him to come here immediately—Go, I say.

Cham. I will, I will, though I'm frighten'd out of my wits. [Exit.

Mrs. H. Do you watch here, my dear; and I'll put myself in order to face them. We'll plot 'em, and counterplot 'em too. [Exit into her Chamber.

Miss S. I have as much pleasure in this revenge, as in being made a countess.—Ha! they are unlocking the door.—Now for it! [Retires.

*FANNY'S Door is unlocked, and BETTY comes out ;
MISS STERLING approaches her.*

Bet. [Calling within] Sir! sir!—now's your time—all's clear. [Seeing Miss Sterling] Stay, stay—not yet—we are watch'd.

Miss S. And so you are, madam Betty.

[Miss Sterling lays hold of her, while Betty locks the Door, and puts the Key into her Pocket.

Bet. [Turning round] What's the matter, madam?

Miss S. Nay, that you shall tell my father and aunt, madam.

Bet. I am no telltale, madam, and no thief; they'll get nothing from me.

Miss S. You have a great deal of courage, Betty

and considering the secrets you have to keep, you have occasion for it.

Bet. My mistress shall never repent her good opinion of me, ma'am.

Enter STERLING.

Ster. What's all this? What's the matter? Why am I disturb'd in this manner?

Miss S. This creature, and my distresses, sir, will explain the matter.

Re-enter MRS. HEIDELBERG, with another Head-dress.

Mrs. H. Now I'm prepar'd for the rancounter.—Well, brother, have you heard of this scene of wickedness?

Ster. Not I—But what is it? speak.—I was got into my little closet, all the lawyers were in bed, and I had almost lost my senses in the confusion of lord Ogleby's mortgages, when I was alarmed with a foolish girl, who could hardly speak; and whether it's fire, or thieves, or murder, or a rape, I'm quite in the dark.

Mrs. H. No, no, there's no rape, brother!—all parties are willing, I believe.

Miss S. Who's in that chamber?

[*Detaining Betty, who seemed to be stealing away.*]

Bet. My mistress.

Miss S. And who's with your mistress?

Bet. Why, who should there be?

Miss S. Open the door then, and let us see.

Bet. The door is open, madam. [*Miss Sterling goes to the Door*] I'll sooner die than peach. [*Exit hastily.*]

Miss S. The door is lock'd; and she has got the key in her pocket.

Mrs. H. There's impudence, brother! piping hot from your daughter Fanny's school!

Ster. But, zounds! what is all this about? You tell me of a sum total, and you don't produce the particulars.

Mrs. H. Sir John Melvil is locked up in your daughter's bed-chamber—There is the particular.

Ster. The devil he is!—That's bad.

Miss S. And he has been there some time, too.

Ster. Ditto!

Mrs. H. Ditto! worse and worse, I say. I'll raise the house, and expose him to my lord, and the whole fammaly.

Ster. By no means! we shall expose ourselves, sister! —The best way is to insure privately—let me alone! I'll make him marry her to-morrow morning.

Miss S. Make him marry her! this is beyond all patience!—You have thrown away all your affection, and I shall do as much by my obedience; unnatural fathers make unnatural children. My revenge is in my own power, and I'll indulge it.—Had they made their escape, I should have been exposed to the derision of the world: but the deriders shall be derided; and so—Help, help, there!—Thieves! thieves!

Mrs. H. Tit-for-tat, Betsy! you are right, my girl.

Ster. Zounds! you'll spoil all—you'll raise the whole family—The devil's in the girl.

Mrs. H. No, no; the devil's in you, brother: I am ashamed of your principles.—What! would you connive at your daughter's being locked up with her sister's husband? Help! Thieves! thieves, I say!

[Cries out.

Ster. Sister, I beg you!—daughter, I command you! —If you have no regard for me, consider yourselves! —we shall lose this opportunity of ennobling our blood, and getting above twenty per cent. for our money.

Miss S. What, by my disgrace and my sister's triumph? I have a spirit above such mean considerations: and to show you that it is not a low-bred, vulgar, 'Change-alley spirit—Help! help! Thieves! thieves! thieves, I say!

Ster. Ay, ay, you may save your lungs—the house is in an uproar.

Enter CANTON, in a Night-gown and Slippers.

Can. Eh, diable! vat is de raison of dis great noise, dis tantamarre?

Ster. Ask those ladies, sir; 'tis of their making.

Lord O. [*Calls within*] Brush!—Brush!—Canton!—Where are you?—What's the matter? [*Rings a Bell*] Where are you?

Ster. 'Tis my lord calls, Mr. Canton.

Can. I com, mi lor! [*Exit. Lord Ogleby still rings.*]

Flow. [*Calls within*] A light! a light here!—where are the servants? Bring a light for me and my brothers.

Ster. Lights here! lights for the gentlemen! [*Exit.*]

Mrs. H. My brother feels, I see—your sister's turn will come next.

Miss S. Ay, ay, let it go round, madam, it is the only comfort I have left.

Re-enter STERLING; with Lights, before SERGEANT FLOWER, with one Boot and a Slipper, and TRAVERSE.

Ster. This way, sir! this way, gentlemen!

Flow. Well but, Mr. Sterling, no danger, I hope? Have they made a burglarious entry? Are you prepared to repulse them? I am very much alarmed about thieves at circuit time. They would be particularly severe with us gentlemen of the bar.

Trav. No danger, Mr. Sterling—no trespass, I hope?

Ster. None, gentlemen, but of those ladies' making.

Mrs. H. You'll be ashain'd to know, gentlemen, that all your labours and studies about this young lady are thrown away—Sir John Melvil is at this moment locked up with this lady's younger sister.

Flow. The thing is a little extraordinary, to be sure; but, why were we to be frighten'd out of our beds for this? Could not we have tried this cause to-morrow morning?

Miss S. But, sir, by to-morrow morning, perhaps, even your assistance would not have been of any service—the birds now in that cage would have flown away.

Enter LORD OGLEBY, in his Robe-de-chambre, Night-cap, &c. leaning on CANTON.

Lord O. I had rather lose a limb than my night's rest. What's the matter with you all?

Ster. Ay, ay, 'tis all over!—Here's my lord, too.

Lord O. What's all this shrieking and screaming? Where's my angelic Fanny? She's safe, I hope?

Mrs. H. Your angelic Fanny; my lord, is lock'd up with your angelic nephew in that chamber.

Lord O. My nephew! Then will I be excommunicated.

Mrs. H. Your nephew, my lord, has been plotting to run away with miss Fanny, and miss Fanny has been plotting to run away with your nephew: and if we had not watched them and call'd up the fammaly, they had been upon the scamper to Scotland by this time.

Lord O. Lookye, ladies! I know that sir John has conceived a violent passion for miss Fanny; and I know too that miss Fanny has conceived a violent passion for another person; and I am so well convinced of the rectitude of her affections, that I will support them with my fortune, my honour, and my life.—Eh, shan't I, Mr. Sterling? [*Smiling*] What say you?

Ster. [*Sulkily*] To be sure, my lord.—These bawling women have been the ruin of every thing. [*Aside.*]

Lord O. But come; I'll end this business in a trice—If you, ladies, will compose yourselves, and Mr. Sterling will ensure miss Fanny from violence, I will engage to draw her from her pillow with a whisper through the key-hole.

Mrs. H. The horrid creatures!—I say, my lord, break the door open.

Lord O. Let me beg of your delicacy not to be too precipitate! Now to our experiment!

[*Advancing towards the Door.*]

Miss S. Now, what will they do? My heart will beat through my bosom.

Re-enter BETTY, with the Key.

Bet. There's no occasion for breaking open doors, my lord; we have done nothing that we ought to be ashamed of, and my mistress shall face her enemies.

[*Going to unlock the Door.*]

Mrs. H. There's impudence!

Lord O. The mystery thickens. Lady of the bed-chamber, [*To Betty*] open the door, and entreat sir John Melvil (for the ladies will have it that he is there) to appear, and answer to high crimes and misdemeanors.—Call sir John Melvil into the court!

Enter SIR JOHN MELVIL, on the other side.

Sir J. I am here, my lord.

Mrs. H. Hey-day!

Sir J. What's all this alarm and confusion? There is nothing but hurry in this house! What is the reason of it?

Lord O. Because you have been in that chamber;—have been! nay, you are there at this moment, as these ladies have protested, so don't deny it——

Trav. This is the clearest alibi I ever knew, Mr. Sergeant.

Flow. Luce clarius.

Lord O. Upon my word, ladies, if you have often these frolics, it would be really entertaining to pass a whole summer with you. But come [*To Betty*] open the door, and entreat your amiable mistress to come forth and dispel all our doubts with her smiles.

Bet. [*Opening the Door*] Madam, you are wanted in this room. [*Pertly.*]

Enter FANNY, in great confusion.

Miss S. You see she's ready dressed—and what confusion she's in!

Mrs. H. Ready to pack off, bag and baggage! Her guilt confounds her!

Flow. Silence in the court, ladies!

Fan. I am confounded, indeed, madam!

Lord O. Don't droop, my beauteous lily! but with your own peculiar modesty declare your state of mind.—Pour conviction into their ears, and rapture into mine. [*Smiling.*]

Fan. I am at this moment the most unhappy—most distressed—the tumult is too much for my heart—and

I want the power to reveal a secret, which to conceal has been the misfortune and misery of my——

[Faints away.]

LOVEWELL rushes out of the Chamber.

Love. My Fanny in danger! I can contain no longer! Prudence were now a crime; all other cares were lost in this! Speak, speak, speak to me, my dearest Fanny! let me but hear thy voice: open your eyes, and bless me with the smallest sign of life!

[During this Speech they are all in Amazement.]

Miss S. Lovewell!—I am easy.

Mrs. H. I am thunderstruck!

Lord O. I am petrified!

Sir J. And I undone.

Fan. *[Recovering]* O, Lovewell!—even supported by thee, I dare not look my father nor his lordship in the face.

Ster. What now? did not I send you to London, sir?

Lord O. Eh!—What! How's this? By what right and title have you been half the night in that lady's bed-chamber?

Love. By that right which makes me the happiest of men! and by a title which I would not forego for any the best of kings could give.

Bet. I could cry my eyes out to hear his magnanimity.

Lord O. I am annihilated!

Ster. I have been choked with rage and wonder; but now I can speak.—Lovewell, you are a villain!—You have broke your word with me.

Fan. Indeed, sir, he has not—you forbade him to think of me, when it was out of his power to obey you—we have been married these four months.

Ster. And he shan't stay in my house four hours. What baseness and treachery! As for you, you shall repent this step as long as you live, madam!

Fan. Indeed, sir, it is impossible to conceive the tortures I have already endured in consequence of my

disobedience. My heart has continually upbraided me for it; and though I was too weak to struggle with affection, I feel that I must be miserable for ever without your forgiveness.

Ster. Lovewell, you shall leave my house directly! and you shall follow him, madam!

Lord O. And if they do, I will receive them into mine. Lookye, Mr. Sterling, there have been some mistakes; which we had all better forget for our own sakes; and the best way to forget them, is to forgive the cause of them; which I do from my soul.—Poor girl! I swore to support her affection with my life and fortune; 'tis a debt of honour, and must be paid——You swore as much too, Mr. Sterling; but your laws in the city will excuse you, I suppose; for you never strike a balance without—errors excepted.

Ster. I am a father, my lord; but for the sake of all other fathers, I think I ought not to forgive her, for fear of encouraging other silly girls, like herself, to throw themselves away without the consent of their parents.

Love. I hope there will be no danger of that, sir. Young ladies, with minds like my Fanny's, would startle at the very shadow of vice; and when they know to what uneasiness only an indiscretion has exposed her, her example, instead of encouraging, will rather serve to deter them.

Mrs. H. Indiscretion, quotha! a mighty pretty delicate word to express obedience!

Lord O. For my part, I indulge my own passions too much to tyrannise over those of other people. Poor souls! I pity them. And you must forgive them too. Come, come, melt a little of your flint, Mr. Sterling!

Ster. Why, why, as to that, my lord—to be sure, he is a relation of yours, my lord——What say you, sister Heidelberg?

Mrs. H. The girl's ruin'd, and I forgive her.

Ster. Well—so do I then.—Nay, no thanks—[*To Lovewell and Fanny, who seem preparing to speak*]—there's an end of the matter.

Lord O. But, Lovewell, what makes you dumb all this while?

Love. Your kindness, my lord—I can scarce believe my own senses—they are all in a tumult of fear, joy, love, expectation, and gratitude; I ever was, and am now more bound in duty to your lordship.—For you, Mr. Sterling, if every moment of my life, spent gratefully in your service, will in some measure compensate the want of fortune, you perhaps will not repent your goodness to me. And you, ladies, I flatter myself, will not for the future suspect me of artifice and intrigue—I shall be happy to oblige and serve you.—As for you, sir John—

Sir J. No apologies to me, Lovewell; I do not deserve any. All I have to offer in excuse for what has happened, is my total ignorance of your situation. Had you dealt a little more openly with me, you would have saved me, yourself, and that lady (who I hope will pardon my behaviour), a great deal of uneasiness. Give me leave, however, to assure you that light and capricious as I may have appeared, now my infatuation is over, I have sensibility enough to be ashamed of the part I have acted, and honour enough to rejoice at your happiness.

Love. And now, my dearest Fanny, though we are seemingly the happiest of beings, yet all our joys will be damped, if his lordship's generosity and Mr. Sterling's forgiveness should not be succeeded by the indulgence, approbation, and consent of these our best benefactors.

[*To the Audience.* *Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

BY MR. GARRICK.

SCENE, *an Assembly. Several Persons at Cards, at different Tables; among the rest, COLONEL TRILL, LORD MINUM, MRS. QUAYER, and SIR PATRICK MAHONY.*

At the Quadrille Table.

Col. T. LADIES, with leave——

2 Lady. Pass!

3 Lady. Pass!

Mrs. Q. You must do more.

Col. T. Indeed I can't.

Mrs. Q. I play in hearts.

Col. T. Encore.

2 Lady. What luck?

Col. T. To-night at Drury-lane is play'd

A comedy, and *tout nouvelle*——a spade!

Is not miss Crotchet at the play?

Mrs. Q. My niece

Has made a party, sir, to damn the piece.

At the Whist Table.

Lord M. I hate a playhouse—Trump—it makes me sick.

1 Lady. We're two by honours, ma'am.

Lord M. And we th' odd trick.

Pray do you know the author, colonel Trill?

Col. T. I know no poets, heav'n be prais'd——Spadille——

1 Lady. I'll tell you who, my lord.

[*Whispers Lord Minum.*

Lord M.

What, he again!

"And dwell such daring souls in little men?"

Be whose it will, they down our throats will cram it.

Col. T. O, no—I have a club—the best——We'll damn it.

Mrs. Q. O, bravo, colonel!—Music is my flame.

Lord M. And mine, by Jupiter!—We've won the game.

Col. T. What, do you love all music?

Mrs. Q. No, not Handel's.

And nasty plays——

Lord M. Are fit for Goths and Vandals.

[*Rise from the Table and pay.*]

From the Piquette Table.

Sir P. Well, faith and troth, that Shakspeare was no fool!

Col. T. I'm glad you like him, sir——so ends the pool.
[*They pay and rise from the Table.*]

SONG.—COLONEL TRILL.

I hate all their nonsense,
Their Shakspeares and Johnsons,
Their plays, and their playhouse, and bards:
'Tis singing, not saying;
A fig for all playing,
But playing, as we do, at cards.

I love to see Jonas,
Am pleas'd too with Comus;
Each well the spectator rewards.
So clever, so neat in
Their tricks and their cheating!
Like them, we would fain deal our cards.

Sir P. King Lear is touching!—And how fine to see
Ould Hamlet's Ghost!—"To be, or not to be."——
What are your op'ras to Othello's roar?
Oh, he's an angel of a Blackamoor!

Lord M. What, when he chokes his wife!

Col. T. And calls her whore?

Sir P. King Richard calls his horse—And then Macbeth,

Whene'er he murders—takes away the breath.

My blood runs cold at ev'ry syllable,
To see the dagger that's invisible. [All laugh.
Laugh if you please—a pretty play——

Lord M. Is pretty.

Sir P. And when there's wit in't——

Col. T. To be sure 'tis witty.

Sir P. I love the playhouse now—so light and gay,
With all those candles—they have ta'en away!

[All laugh.

For all your game, what makes it so much brighter?

Col. T. Put out the lights, and then——

Lord M. 'Tis so much lighter.

Sir P. Pray do you mane, sirs, more than you express?

Col. T. Just as it happens——

Lord M. Either more or less.

Mrs. Q. An't you asham'd, sir? [To Sir Patrick.

Sir P. Me!—I seldom blush:

For little Shakspeare, faith, I'd take a push.

Lord M. News, news! here comes miss Crotchet
from the play.

Enter MISS CROTCHET.

Mrs. Q. Well, Crotchet, what's the news?

Miss C. We've lost the day.

Col. T. Tell us, dear miss, all you have heard and seen.

Miss C. I'm tir'd—a chair—here, take my capuchin.

Lord M. And isn't it damn'd, miss?

Miss C. No, my lord, not quite.

But we shall damn it.

Col. T. When?

Miss C. To-morrow night.

There is a party of us, all of fashion,

Resolv'd to exterminate this vulgar passion:

A playhouse! what a place!—I must forswear it;

A little mischief only makes one bear it.

Such crowds of city folks!—so rude and pressing!

And their horse laughs so hideously distressing!

Whene'er we hiss'd, they frown'd and fell a swearing,
Like their own Guildhall giants—fierce and staring!

Col. T. What said the folks of fashion? were they
cross?

Lord M. The rest have no more judgment than my
horse.

Miss C. Lord Grimly said 'twas execrable stuff.
Says one—"Why so, my lord?"—My lord took snuff.
In the first act lord George began to doze,
And criticis'd the author through his nose;
So loud indeed, that as his lordship snor'd,
The pit turn'd round, and all the brutes encor'd.
Some lords indeed approv'd the author's jokes.

Lord M. We have among us, miss, some foolish
folks.

Miss C. Says poor lord Simper—"Well, now to my
mind,
The piece is good;"—but he's both deaf and blind.
Sir P. Upon my soul, a very pretty story!
And quality appears in all its glory.

There was some merit in the piece, no doubt.

Miss C. O, to be sure!—if one could find it out.

Col. T. But tell us, miss, the subject of the play.

Miss C. Why, 'twas a marriage—yes—a marriage—
stay—

A lord, an aunt, two sisters, and a merchant—

A baronet, ten lawyers, a fat sergeant,

Are all produc'd—to talk with one another;

And about something make a mighty pother!

They all go in and out, and to and fro;

And talk and quarrel—as they come and go—

Then go to bed—and then get up—and then—

Scream, faint, scold, kiss—and go to bed again.—

[All laugh.

Such is the play—Your judgment—never sham it.—

Col. T. Oh, damn it!

Mrs. Q. Damn it!

1 Lady. Damn it!

Miss C. Damn it!

Lord M. Damn it!

Sir P. Well, faith, you speak your minds, and I'll be free—

Good night—this company's too good for me. [*Going.*

Col. T. Your judgment, dear air Patrick, makes us proud. [*All laugh.*

Sir P. Laugh, if you please, but pray don't laugh so loud. [*Exit.*

RECITATIVE.—COLONEL TRILL, MISS CROTCHET, and LORD MINUM.

Col. T. Now the barbarian's gone, miss, tune your tongue,

And let us raise our spirits high with song.

Miss C. Colonel, *de tout mon cœur*—I've one in *petto*, Which you shall join, and make it a *duetto*.

Lord M. *Bella signora, et amico mio*, I too will join, and then we'll make a *trio*.

Col. T. Come all and join the full-mouth'd chorus : And drive all tragedy and comedy before us.

[*All the Company rise and advance to the Front of the Stage.*

TRIO.—COLONEL TRILL, MISS CROTCHET, and LORD MINUM.

Col. T. Would you ever go to see a tragedy?

Miss C. Never, never.

Col. T. A comedy?

Lord M. Never, never.

Live for ever.

Tweedle-dum, and tweedle-dee.

Col. T. } Live for ever.

Lord M. } Tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee.

Miss C. }

Chorus. Would you ever go to see, &c.



THE
CONFEDERACY.

A Comedy.

BY SIR JOHN VANBRUGH.

CORRECTLY GIVEN, FROM COPIES USED IN THE THEATRES,

BY

THOMAS DIBDIN,

OF THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.

Author of several Dramatic Pieces, &c.



Printed at the Chiswick Press,

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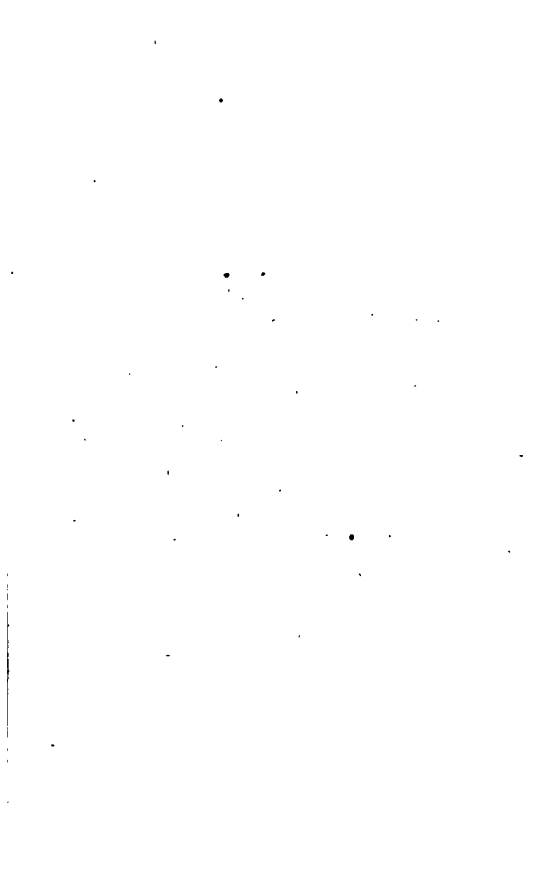
**FOR WHITTINGHAM AND ARLISS, PATERNOSTER
ROW, LONDON.**

1815.



THE CONFEDERACY

Was produced at the Haymarket in 1705. It has been observed of this comedy, that though full of intrigue, it is less exceptionable on the score of indelicacy than any other of its author's productions. This is saying very little for other plays written by Sir John Vanbrugh. The CONFEDERACY is not here given with all its original exuberances; and yet much remains which might be spared: it is, however, softened down, as far as the editor could presume to recede from the plan of giving plays as they are acted might warrant; while his wish was to render it less exceptionable in the closet, than it still is found on the stage.



PROLOGUE.

YE gods! what crime had my poor father done,
'That you should make a poet of his son?
Or is't for some great services of his,
You're pleas'd to compliment his boy—with this?

[Shows his Crown of Laurel.]

The honour, I must needs confess, is great,
If, with his crown, you'd tell him where to eat.
'Tis well.—But I have more complaints—look here!

[Shows his ragged Coat.]

Harkye—d'ye think this suit good winter wear?
In a cold morning—whu—at a lord's gate,
How you have let the porter let me wait!
You'll say, perhaps, you knew I'd get no harm;
You'd given me fire enough to keep me warm.
Ah—

A world of blessings to that fire we owe;
Without it, I'd ne'er make this princely show.
I have a brother too, now in my sight,

[Looks behind the Scenes.]

A busy man amongst us here to-night:
Your fire has made him play a thousand pranks,
For which, no doubt, you've had his daily thanks;
He's as thank'd you first for all his decent plays,
Where he so nick'd it, when he writ for praise.
Next for his meddling with some folks in black,
And bringing—*souse*—a priest upon his back;
For building houses here t'oblige the peers,
And fetching all their house about his ears;
For a new play he's as now thought fit to write,
To sooth the town—which they will damn—to-night.

These benefits are such, no man can doubt
But he'll go on, and set your fancy out,
Till, for reward of all his noble deeds,
At last, like other sprightly folks, he speeds:
Has this great recompense fix'd on his brow
At fam'd Parnassus; has your leave to bow,
And walk about the streets, equipt—as I am now.

}

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted.

<i>Gripe</i>	Mr. Leigh.
<i>Moneytrap</i>	Mr. Dogget.
<i>Dick</i>	Mr. Booth.
<i>Brass</i>	Mr. Pack.
<i>Clip</i>	Mr. Mimos.
<i>Clarissa</i>	Mrs. Barry.
<i>Araminta</i>	Mrs. Porter.
<i>Corinna</i>	Mrs. Bradshaw.
<i>Flippanta</i>	Mrs. Bracegirdle.
<i>Mrs. Amlet</i>	Mrs. Willis.
<i>Mrs. Cloggit</i>	Mrs. Baker.

Drury Lane, 1814. Covent Garden, 1811.

<i>Gripe</i>	Mr. Knight.	Mr. Emery.
<i>Moneytrap</i>	Mr. Dowton.	Mr. Munden.
<i>Dick</i>	Mr. R. Palmer.	Mr. Jones.
<i>Brass</i>	Mr. Decamp.	Mr. Fawcett.
<i>Clip</i>	Mr. Maddocks.	Mr. King.
<i>Jessamin</i>	Mr. Chatterley.	Mr. Menage.
<i>Clarissa</i>	Mrs. Davison.	Mrs. C. Kemble.
<i>Araminta</i>	Miss Boyce.	Mrs. Humphries.
<i>Corinna</i>	Mrs. Edwin.	Miss S. Booth.
<i>Flippanta</i>	Mrs. Orger.	Mrs. Gibbs.
<i>Mrs. Amlet</i>	Mrs. Sparks.	Mrs. Davenport.
<i>Mrs. Cloggit</i>	Miss Tidswell.	Mrs. Emery.

ACT THE FIRST.



SCENE I. *Covent-garden.*

Enter MRS. AMLET and MRS. CLOGGIT, meeting.

Mrs. A. **G**OOD morrow, neighbour; good morrow, neighbour Cloggit! How does all at your house this morning?

Mrs. C. Thank you kindly, Mrs. Amlet, thank you kindly. How do you do, I pray?

Mrs. A. At the old rate, neighbour, poor and honest. These are hard times, good lack!

Mrs. C. If they are hard with you, what are they with us? You have a good trade going: all the great folks in town help you off with your merchandise.

Mrs. A. Yea, they do help us off with them indeed; they buy all.

Mrs. C. And pay——

Mrs. A. For some.

Mrs. C. Well, 'tis a thousand pities, Mrs. Amlet, they are not as ready at one as they are at t'other; for, not to wrong 'em, they give very good rates.

Mrs. A. O, for that, let's do 'em justice, neighbour; they never make two words upon the price, all they haggle about is the day of payment.

Mrs. C. There's all the dispute, as you say.

Mrs. A. But that's a wicked one. For my part, neighbour, I'm just tired off my legs with trotting after 'em; besides, it eats out all our profit. Would you believe it, Mrs. Cloggit, I have worn out four pair of pattens with following my old lady Youthful, for one set of false teeth, and but three pots of paint?

Mrs. C. Look you there now.

Mrs. A. If they would but once let me get enough by 'em to keep a coach to carry me a dunning after 'em, there would be some conscience in it.

Mrs. C. Ay, that were something. But now you talk of conscience, Mrs. Amlet, how do you speed amongst your city customers?

Mrs. A. My city customers! Now, by my truth, neighbour, between the city and the court (with reverence be it spoken), there's not a pin to choose. My ladies in the city, in times past, were as full of gold as they were of religion, and as punctual in their payments as they were in their prayers; but since they have set their minds upon quality, adieu one, adieu t'other, their money and their consciences are gone, heaven knows where.

Mrs. C. But what the murrain have they to do with quality? Why don't their husbands make 'em mind their shops?

Mrs. A. Their husbands! their husbands, say'st thou, woman? Alack, alack! they mind their husbands, neighbour, no more than they do a sermon.

Mrs. C. Good lack-a-day, that women, born of sober parents, should be prone to follow ill examples! But now we talk of quality, when did you hear of your son Richard, Mrs. Amlet? My daughter Flip says she met him t'other day, in a laced coat, with three fine ladies, his footman at his heels, and as gay as a bridegroom.

Mrs. A. Is it possible? Ah, the rogue! Well, neighbour, all's well that ends well! But Dick will be hang'd.

Mrs. C. That were pity.

Mrs. A. Pity, indeed; for he's a hopeful young man to look on; but he leads a life—Well—where he has it, heaven knows; but they say, he pays his club with the best of 'em. I have seen him but once these three months, neighbour; and then the varlet wanted money. But I bid him march; and march he did, to some purpose; for in less than an hour, back comes my gentleman into the house, walks to and fro in the room, with his hat on one side, whistling a minuet, and tossing a purse of gold from one hand to 'other, with no more respect (heaven bless us!) than if it had been an orange. "Sirrah," says I, "where have you got that?" He answers me never a word; but sets his arms a-kimbo, cocks his saucy hat in my face, turns about upon his ungracious heel, and I've never set eyes on him since.

Mrs. C. Look you there now; to see what the youth of this age are come to!

Mrs. A. See what they will come to, neighbour.—Heaven shield, I say; but Dick's upon the gallop. Well, I must bid you good morrow; I'm going where I doubt I shall meet but a sorry welcome.

Mrs. C. To get in some old debt, I'll warrant you?

Mrs. A. Neither better nor worse.

Mrs. C. From a lady of quality?

Mrs. A. No, she's but a scrivener's wife; but she lives as well, and pays as ill, as the stateliest countess of 'em all.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II. *The Street, with MONEYTRAP'S House.*

Enter BRASS.

Brass. Well, surely through the world's wide extent, there never appeared so impudent a fellow as my school-fellow Dick; to pass himself upon the town for a gentleman, drop into all the best company with an easy air, as if his natural element were in the sphere of quality; when the rogue had a kettle-drum to his father, who was hang'd for robbing a church, and has a pedlar to

his mother, who carries her shop under her arm. But here he comes.

Enter DICK.

Dick. Well, Brass, what news? Hast thou given my letter to Flippanta?

Brass. I'm but just come; I han't knock'd at the door yet. But I have a damn'd piece of news for you.

Dick. As how?

Brass. We must quit this country.

Dick. We'll be hang'd first.

Brass. So you will, if you stay.

Dick. Why, what's the matter?

Brass. There's a storm coming.

Dick. From whence?

Brass. From the worst point in the compass, the law.

Dick. The law! why, what have I to do with the law?

Brass. Nothing; and therefore it has something to do with you.

Dick. Explain.

Brass. You know you cheated a young fellow at piquet t'other day, of the money he had to raise his company.

Dick. Well, what then?

Brass. Why, he's sorry he lost it.

Dick. Who doubts that?

Brass. Ay, but that is not all, he's such a fool to think of complaining on't.

Dick. Then I must be so wise to stop his mouth.

Brass. How?

Dick. Give him a little back; if that won't do, strangle him.

Brass. You are very quick in your methods.

Dick. Men must be so, that will dispatch business.

Brass. Hark you, colonel, your father died in's bed?

Dick. He might have done, if he had not been a fool.

Brass. Why, he robb'd a church.

Dick. Ay, but he forget to make sure of the sexton.

Brass. Are not you a great rogue?

Dick. Or I should wear worse clothes.

Brass. Hark you, I would advise you to change your life.

Dick. And turn ballad-singer.

Brass. Not so, neither.

Dick. What then?

Brass. Why, if you can get this young wench, reform and live honest.

Dick. That's the way to be starv'd.

Brass. No, she has money enough to buy you a good place, and pay me into the bargain for helping her to so good a match. You have but this throw left to save you, for you are not ignorant, youngster, that your morals begin to be pretty well known about town; have a care your noble birth and your honourable relations are not discovered too; there needs but that, to have you toss'd in a blanket, for the entertainment of the first company of ladies you intrude into; and then, like a dutiful son, you may dabble about with your mother, and sell paint: she's old and weak, and wants somebody to carry her goods after her. How like a dog will you look, with a pair of plod shoes, your hair cropp'd up to your ears, and a band-box under your arm!

Dick. Why, faith, *Brass*, I think thou art in the right on't; I must fix my affairs quickly, or madam Fortune will be playing some of her tricks with me; therefore I'll tell thee what we'll do; we'll pursue this old rogue's daughter heartily; we'll cheat his family to some purpose, and they shall atone for the rest of mankind.

Brass. Have at her then; I'll about your business presently.

Dick. Success attend thee.

[Exit.

Brass. A great rogue—Well, I say nothing. But when I have got matters into a good posture, he shall sign and seal, or I'll have him tumbled out of the house like a cheese. Now for Flippanta. [He knocks.

Enter FLIPPANTA.

Flip. Who's that? Brass?

Brass. Flippanta!

Flip. What want you, rogue's face?

Brass. Is your mistress dress'd?

Flip. What, already? Is the fellow drunk?

Brass. Why, with respect to her looking-glass, it's almost two.

Flip. What then, fool?

Brass. Why then it's time for the mistress of the house to come down, and look after her family.

Flip. Pr'ythee, don't be an owl. Those that go to bed at night may rise in the morning; we that go to bed in the morning, may rise in the afternoon.

Brass. When does she make her visits then? .

Flip. By candle-light; we women hate inquisitive sunshine: but do you know that my lady is going to turn good housewife?

Brass. What, is she going to die?

Flip. Die!

Brass. Why, that's the only way to save money for her family.

Flip. No; but she has thought of a project to save chair hire.

Brass. As how?

Flip. Why all the company she used to keep abroad, she now intends shall meet her at her own house. Your master has advised her to set up a pharo bank.

Brass. Nay, if he advised her to it, it's right; but has she acquainted her husband with it yet?

Flip. What to do? When the company meet he'll see them.

Brass. Nay, that's true, as you say, he'll know it soon enough.

Flip. Well, I must be gone; have you any business with my lady?

Brass. Yes, as ambassador from Araminta, I have a letter for her.

Flip. Give it me.

Brass. Hold—and, as first minister of state to the colonel, I have an affair to communicate to thee.

Flip. What is't? quick.

Brass. Why—he's in love.

Flip. With what?

Brass. A woman—and her money together.

Flip. Who is she?

Brass. Corinna. He has ordered me to demand her of thee in marriage.

Flip. Of me?

Brass. Why, when a man of quality has a mind to a city fortune, wouldst have him apply to her father and mother?

Flip. No.

Brass. No, so I think: men of our end of the town are better bred than to use ceremony. Will you slip this letter into her prayer-book, my little queen? It's a very passionate one—It's seal'd with a heart and a dagger; you may see by that what he intends to do with himself.

Flip. Are there any verses in it? If not, I won't touch it.

Brass. Not one word in prose, it's dated in rhyme.

[*She takes it.*]

Flip. Well, but—have you brought nothing else?

Brass. 'Gad forgive me; I'm the forgetfullest dog—I have a letter for you too—here—'tis in a purse, but it's in prose; you won't touch it.

Flip. Yes, hang it, it is not good to be too dainty.

Brass. How useful a virtue is humility! Well, child, we shall have an answer to-morrow, shan't we?

Flip. I can't promise you that; for our young gentlewoman is not so often in my way as she would be. Her father (who is a citizen from the foot to the forehead of him) lets her seldom converse with her mother-in-law and me, for fear she should learn the airs of a woman of quality. But I'll take the first occasion: see there's my lady, go in and deliver your letter to her. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *A Parlour.*

Enter CLARISSA, followed by FLIPPANTA and BRASS.

Cla. No messages this morning from any body, Flippanta? Lard, how dull that is! O, there's Brass! I did not see thee, Brass. What news dost thou bring?

Brass. Only a letter from Araminta, madam.

Cla. Give it to me—Open it for me, Flippanta, I am so lazy to-day. [Sits down.]

Brass. Be sure now you deliver my master's as carefully as I do this. [To Flippanta.]

Flip. Don't trouble thyself, I'm no novice.

Cla. 'Tis well; there needs no answer, since she'll be here so soon. [To Brass.]

Brass. Your ladyship has no further commands, then?

Cla. Not at this time, honest Brass. Flippanta!

[Exit Brass.]

Flip. Madam.

Cla. My husband's in love.

Flip. In love?

Cla. With Araminta.

Flip. Impossible!

Cla. This letter from her is to give me an account of it.

Flip. Methinks you are not very much alarm'd.

Cla. No; thou know'st I'm not much tortur'd with jealousy.

Flip. Nay, you are much in the right on't, madam; for jealousy's a city passion; 'tis a thing unknown amongst people of quality.

Cla. Fie! a woman must indeed be of a mechanic mould, who is either troubled or pleased with any thing her husband can do to her. Pr'ythee mention him no more; 'tis the dullest theme——

Flip. 'Tis splenetic indeed. But when once you open your pharo bank, I hope that will put him out of your head.

Cla. Alas, Flippanta, I begin to grow weary even of the thoughts of that too.

Flip. How so?

Cla. Why, I have thought on't a day and a night already; and four-and-twenty hours, thou know'st, is enough to make one weary of any thing.

Flip. Now, by my conscience, you have more woman in you than all your sex together: you never know what you would have.

Cla. Thou mistakest the thing quite. I always know what I want, but I am never pleased with what I have. The want of a thing is perplexing enough, but the possession of it is intolerable.

Flip. Well, I don't know what you are made of, but other women would think themselves blest in your case; handsome, witty, loved by every body, and of so happy a composure to care a fig for nobody. You have no one passion, but that of your pleasures; and you have in me a servant devoted to all your desires, let them be as extravagant as they will: yet all this is nothing, you can still be out of humour.

Cla. Alas, I have too much cause.

Flip. Why, what have you to complain of?

Cla. Alas, I have more subjects for spleen than one; Is it not a most horrible thing that I should be but a scrivener's wife?—Come—don't flatter me, don't you think nature design'd me for something plus elevee?

Flip. Nay, that's certain; but on t'other side, methinks, you ought to be in some measure content, since you live like a woman of quality, though you are none.

Cla. O fie! the very quintessence of it is wanting.

Flip. What's that?

Cla. Why, I dare abuse nobody: I'm afraid to affront people, though I don't like their faces; or to ruin their reputations, though they pique me to it, by taking ever so much pains to preserve 'em: I dare not raise a lie of a man, though he neglects to make love to me; nor report a woman to be a fool, though she's handsomer than I am. In short, I dare not so much as bid my footman kick the people out of doors, though they come to ask me for what I owe them.

Flip. All this is very hard indeed.

Cla. Ah, Flippanta, the perquisites of quality are of an unspeakable value.

Flip. They are of some use, I must confess; but we must not expect to have every thing. You have wit and beauty, and a fool to your husband: come, come, madam, that's a good portion for one.

Cla. Alas, what signifies beauty and wit, when one dares neither jilt the men, nor abuse the women? I have been sometimes almost choked with scandal, and durst not cough it up for want of being a countess.

Flip. Poor lady!

Cla. O! liberty is a fine thing, Flippanta, it's a great help in conversation to have leave to say what one will. I have seen a woman of quality, who has not had one grain of wit, entertain a whole company, the most agreeably in the world, only with her malice. But 'tis in vain to repine, I can't mend my condition, till my husband dies; so I'll say no more on't, but think of making the most of the state I am in.

Flip. That's your best way, madam; and in order to it, pray consider how you'll get some ready money to set your pharo bank a going; for that's necessary.

Cla. Thou say'st true: but what trick I shall play my husband to get some, I don't know: for my pretence of losing my diamond necklace has put the man into such a passion, I'm afraid he won't bear reason.

Flip. No matter; he begins to think 'tis lost in earnest: so I fancy you may venture to sell it, and raise money that way.

Cla. That can't be, for he has left odious notes with all the goldsmiths in town.

Flip. Well, we must pawn it then.

Cla. I'm quite tired with dealing with those pawn-brokers.

Flip. I'm afraid you'll continue the trade a great while, for all that. *[Aside.]*

Enter JESSAMIN.

Jes. Madam, there's the woman below that sells

paint and patches, false teeth, and all sorts of things to the ladies; I can't think of her name.

Flip. 'Tis Mrs. Amlet; she wants money.

Cla. Well, I han't enough for myself; it's an unreasonable thing she should think I have any for her.

Flip. She's a troublesome jade.

Cla. So are all people that come a dunning.

Flip. What will you do with her?

Cla. I have just now thought on't. She's very rich, that woman is, Flippanta; I'll borrow some money of her.

Flip. Borrow! sure you jest, madam?

Cla. No, I'm in earnest; I give thee commission to do it for me.

Flip. Me!

Cla. Why dost thou stare, and look so ungainly? Don't I speak to be understood?

Flip. Yes, I understand you well enough; but Mrs. Amlet—

Cla. But Mrs. Amlet must lend me some money; where shall I have any to pay her else?

Flip. That's true; I never thought of that truly. But here she is.

Enter MRS. AMLET.

Cla. How d'ye do? How d'ye do, Mrs. Amlet? I han't seen you these thousand years; and yet I believe I'm down in your books.

Mrs. A. O, madam, I don't come for that, alack.

Flip. Good morrow, Mrs. Amlet.

Mrs. A. Good morrow, Mrs. Flippanta.

Cla. How much am I indebted to you, Mrs. Amlet?

Mrs. A. Nay, if your ladyship desires to see your bill, I believe I may have it about me.—There, madam, if it ben't too much fatigue to you to look it over.

Cla. Let me see it, for I hate to be in debt, where I am obliged to pay. [*Aside.—Reads*] *Imprimis, For bolstering out the countess of Crump's left hip—*O fie, this does not belong to me.

Mrs. A. I beg your ladyship's pardon. I mistook

indeed; 'tis a countless's bill I have writ out to little purpose. I furnish'd her two years ago with three pair of hips, and am not paid for them yet: but some are better customers than some. There's your ladyship's bill, madam.

Cla. Ay, this may be mine, but 'tis of a preposterous length. Do you think I can waste time to read every article, Mrs. Amlet? I'd as lief read a sermon.

Mrs. A. Alack-a-day, there's no need of fatiguing yourself at that rate; cast an eye only, if your honour pleases, upon the sum total.

Cla. Total, fifty-six pounds—and odd things.

Flip. But six-and-fifty pounds!

Mrs. A. Nay, another body would have made it twice as much; but there's a blessing goes along with a moderate profit.

Cla. Flippanta, go to my cashier, let him give you six-and-fifty pounds. Make haste: don't you hear me? six-and-fifty pounds. Is it so difficult to be comprehended?

Flip. No, madam, I, I comprehend six-and-fifty pounds, but—

Cla. But go and fetch it then.

Flip. What she means, I don't know; but I shall, I suppose, before I bring her the money. [*Aside. Exit.*]

Cla. [*Setting her Hair in a Pocket-glass*] The trade you follow gives you a great deal of trouble, Mrs. Amlet.

Mrs. A. Alack-a-day, a world of pain, madam; and yet there's small profit, as your honour sees by your bill.

Cla. Poor woman! Sometimes you have great losses, Mrs. Amlet?

Mrs. A. I have two thousand pounds owing me, of which I shall never get ten shillings.

Cla. Poor woman! you have a great charge of children, Mrs. Amlet?

Mrs. A. Only one wicked rogue, madam; who, I think, will break my heart.

Cla. Poor woman!

Mrs. A. He'll be hang'd, madam—that will be the end of him. Where he gets it, heav'n knows; but he's always shaking his heels with the ladies, and his elbows with the lords. He's as fine as a prince, and as grim as the best of them; but the ungracious rogue tells all he comes near that his mother is dead, and I am but his nurse.

Cla. Poor woman!

Mrs. A. Alas, madam, he's like the rest of the world: every body's for appearing to be more than they are, and that ruins all.

Cla. Well, *Mrs. Amlet*, you'll excuse me, I have a little business; Flippanta will bring your money presently. Adieu, *Mrs. Amlet*. [Exit.]

Mrs. A. And I return your honour many thanks.—Ah, there's my good lady, not so much as read her bill; if the rest were like her I should soon have money enough to go as fine as Dick himself.

Enter Dick.

Dick. Sure Flippanta must have given my letter by this time. I long to know how it has been received.

[Aside.]

Mrs. A. Misericorde! what do I see?

Dick. Fiends and hags—the witch, my mother!

Mrs. A. Nay, 'tis he; ah, my poor Dick; what art thou doing here?

Dick. What a misfortune!

[Aside.]

Mrs. A. Good Lord! how bravely thou art deck'd! —But it's all one. I am thy mother still! and though thou art a wicked child, nature will speak. I love thee, Dick, still; ah, Dick, my poor Dick!

[Embraces him.]

Dick. Blood and thunder! will you ruin me?

[Breaks from her.]

Mrs. A. Ah, the blasphemous rogue, how he swears.

Dick. You destroy all my hopes.

Mrs. A. Will your mother's kiss destroy you, varlet? Thou art an ungracious bird; kneel down, and ask my blessing, sirrah.

Dick. Death and furies!

Mrs. A. Ah, he's a proper young man; see what a shape he has! ah, poor child!

[Runs to embrace him, he still avoids her.]

Dick. Oons! keep off, the woman's mad. If any body comes, my fortune's lost.

Mrs. A. What fortune, ha? speak, graceless. Ah, Dick, thou'lt be hang'd, Dick.

Dick. Good dear mother now, don't call me Dick here.

Mrs. A. Not call thee Dick? Is it not thy name? What shall I call thee? Mr. Amlet? ha! Art not thou a presumptuous rascal? Hark you, sirrah, I hear of your tricks; you disown me for your mother, and say I am but your nurse. Is not this true?

Dick. No, I love you; I respect you. *[Taking her Hand]* I am all duty. But if you discover me here, you ruin the fairest prospect that man ever had.

Mrs. A. What prospect? ha! Come, this is a lie now.

Dick. No, my honour'd parent, what I say is true; I'm about a great fortune. I'll bring you home a daughter-in-law, in a coach and six horses, if you'll be quiet: I can't tell you more now.

Mrs. A. Is it possible?

Dick. 'Tis true, by Jupiter.

Mrs. A. My dear lad——

Dick. For heaven's sake——

Mrs. A. But tell me, Dick——

Dick. I'll follow you home in a moment, and tell you all.

Mrs. A. What a shape is there——

Dick. Pray, mother, go.

Mrs. A. I must receive some money here first, which shall go for thy wedding-dinner.

Dick. Here's somebody coming. 'Sdeath, she'll betray me.

Re-enter FLIPPANTA. DICK makes Signs to his Mother. Good morrow, dear Flippanta; how do all the ladies within?

Flip. At your service, colonel; as far at least as my interest goes.

Mrs. A. Colonel!—Law you now, how Dick's respected! [*Aside.*]

Dick. Waiting for thee, Flippanta, I was making acquaintance with this old gentlewoman here.

Mrs. A. The pretty lad; he's as impudent as a lord. [*Aside.*]

Dick. Who is this good woman, Flippanta?

Flip. A gin of all trades; an old daggling cheat, that hobbles about from house to house to bubble the ladies of their money. I have a small business of yours in my pocket, colonel.

Dick. An answer to my letter?

Flip. So quick indeed? No, it's your letter itself.

Dick. Hast thou not given it then yet?

Flip. I han't had an opportunity; but 'twon't be long first. Won't you go in and see my lady?

Dick. Yes, I'll go make her a short visit. But dear Flippanta, don't forget: my life and fortune are in your hands.

Flip. Ne'er fear, I'll take care of 'em.

Mrs. A. How he traps 'em! let Dick alone. [*Aside.*]

Dick. Your servant, good madam.

[*To his Mother.* Exit.

Mrs. A. Your honour's most devoted.—A pretty, civil, well-bred gentleman this, Mrs. Flippanta. Pray, whom may he be?

Flip. A man of great note; colonel Shapely.

Mrs. A. Is it possible? I have heard much of him indeed, but never saw him before: one may see quality in every limb of him: he's a fine man, truly.

Flip. I think you are in love with him, Mrs. Amlet.

Mrs. A. Alas, those days are done with me; but if I were as fair as I was once; and had as much money as some folks, colonel Shapely should not catch cold for want of a bedfellow. I love your men of rank, they have something in their air does so distinguish them from the rascality.

Flip. People of quality are fine things indeed, Mrs.

Amlet, if they had but a little more money; but for want of that, they are forced to do things their great souls are ashamed of. For example—here's my lady—she owes you but six-and-fifty pounds.

Mrs. A. Well!

Flip. Well, and she has it not by her to pay you.

Mrs. A. How can that be?

Flip. I don't know; her cash-keeper's out of humour, he says he has no money.

Mrs. A. What a presumptuous piece of vermin is a cash-keeper!—Tell his lady he has no money!—Now, Mrs. Flippanta, you may see his bags are full, by his being so saucy.

Flip. If they are, there's no help for't; he'll do what he pleases, till he comes to make up his yearly accounts.

Mrs. A. But madam plays sometimes; so when she has good fortune, she may pay me out of her winnings.

Flip. O ne'er think of that, Mrs. Amlet; if she had won a thousand pounds, she'd rather die in a gaol than pay off a farthing with it.

Mrs. A. Why, what shall we do then? for I han't one penny to buy bread.

Flip. I'll tell you—it just now comes in my head: I know my lady has a little occasion for money, at this time; so—if you lend her—a hundred pounds—do you see, then she may pay you your six-and-fifty out of it.

Mrs. A. Sure, Mrs. Flippanta, you think to make a fool of me.

Flip. No, the devil fetch me if I do—You shall have a diamond necklace in pawn.

Mrs. A. O ho, a pawn! That's another case. And when must she have the money?

Flip. In a quarter of an hour.

Mrs. A. Say no more. Bring the necklace to my house, it shall be ready for you.

Flip. I'll be with you in a moment.

Mrs. A. Adieu, Mrs. Flippanta.

Flip. Adieu, Mrs. Amlet. [*Exit Mrs. Amlet*] So—this ready money will make us all happy. This spring

will set our pharo table a going, and that's a wheel will turn twenty others. My lady's young and handsome; she'll have a dozen intrigues upon her hands, before she has been twice at her prayers. So much the better; the more the grist, the richer the miller. Sure never wench got into so hopeful a place: here's a fortune to be sold, a mistress to be debauch'd, and a master to be ruin'd. If I don't feather my nest, and get a good husband, I deserve to die both a maid and a beggar.

[Exit.

ACT THE SECOND.



SCENE I. *GRIPE's House.*

CLARISSA and DICK discovered.

Cla. What, in the name of dulness, is the matter with you, colonel? You are as studious as a crack'd chymist.

Dick. My head, madam, is full of your husband.

Cla. The worst furniture for a head in the universe.

Dick. I am thinking of his passion for your friend Araminta.

Cla. Passion!—Dear colonel, give it a less violent name.

Enter BRASS.

Dick. Well, sir, what want you?

Brass. The affair I told you of goes ill. There's an action out!

[Aside to Dick.]

Dick. The devil there is!

Cla. What news brings Brass?

Dick. Before 'Gad, I can't tell, madam; the dog will never speak out. My lord What-d'ye-call-um waits for me at my lodging: is not that it?

Brass. Yes, sir.

Dick. Madam, I ask your pardon.

Cla. Your servant, sir. [*Exit Dick and Brass*]
Jessamin! [*Sits down.*]

Enter JESSAMIN.

Jes. Madam.

Cla. Where's Corinna? Call her to me, if her father han't lock'd her up; I want her company.

Jes. Madam, her music-master is with her.

Cla. Pshaw! she's always taken up with her impertinent music-master. Flippanta stays an age with that old fool, Mrs. Amlet; and Araminta, before she can come abroad, is so long a placing her coquette-patch, that I must be a year without company. How insupportable is a moment's uneasiness to a woman of spirit and pleasure!

Enter FLIPPANTA.

O, art thou come at last? Pr'ythee, Flippanta, learn to move a little quicker; thou know'st how impatient I am.

Flip. Yes, when you expect money.

Cla. Well, hast thou brought me any after all?

Flip. Yes, I have brought some. There, [*Gives her a Purse*] the old hag has struck off her bill, the rest is in that purse.

Cla. 'Tis well. But take care, Flippanta, my husband don't suspect any thing of this, 'twould vex him; and I don't love to make him uneasy: so I would spare him these little sort of troubles, by keeping 'em from his knowledge.

Flip. See the tenderness she has for him; and yet he's always complaining of you.

Cla. 'Tis the nature of 'em, Flippanta: a husband is a growling animal.

Flip. How exactly you define them!

Cla. O, I know 'em, Flippanta: though I confess my poor wretch diverts me sometimes with his ill humours. I wish he would quarrel with me to-day a little, to pass

away the time; for I find myself in a violent spleen.—
My cloke and gloves, and the coach to the door.

Flip. Why, whither are you going?

Cla. I can't tell yet; but I would go spend some money, since I have it.

Flip. Why, you want nothing, that I know of.

Cla. How awkward an objection now is that; as if a woman of education bought things because she wanted 'em.

Enter ARAMINTA.

Lard, what a tedious while you have let me expect you! I was afraid you were not well. How do you do to-day?

Ara. As well as a woman can do, that has not slept all night.

Flip. Methinks, madam, you are pretty well awake, however.

Ara. O, 'tis not a little thing will make a woman of my spirit look drowsy.

Cla. But pr'ythee what was it disturb'd you?

Ara. Not your husband, so don't trouble yourself; at least, I am not in love with him yet.

Cla. Well remember'd; I had quite forgot that matter. I wish you much joy; you have made a noble conquest indeed.

Ara. Do you know 'tis in my power to ruin this poor thing of yours? His whole estate is at my service.

Flip. Strike him, madam, and let my lady go your halves. There's no sin in plundering a husband, so his wife has share of the booty.

Ara. Whenever she gives me her orders, I shall be very ready to obey 'em.

Cla. Why, as odd a thing as such a project may seem, Araminta, I believe I shall have a little serious discourse with you about it. But pr'ythee tell me how you have pass'd the night; for I am sure your mind has been roving upon some pretty thing or other.

Ara. Why, I have been studying all the ways my brain could produce to plague my husband.

Cla. No wonder indeed you look so fresh this morn-

ing, after the satisfaction of such pleasing ideas all night.

Ara. Why, can a woman do less than study mischief, when she has tumbled and toas'd herself into a burning fever for the want of sleep? But we'll discourse more of these matters as we go; for I must make a tour among the shops.

Clia. My coach waits at the door; we'll talk of 'em as we rattle along. *[Exit Clariissa and Araminta.]*

Flip. What a pretty little pair of amiable persons are there gone to hold a council of war together! Poor birds! What would they do with their time, if the plaguing their husbands did not help 'em to employment? Well, if idleness be the root of all evil, then matrimony's good for something; for it sets many a poor woman to work. But here comes miss. I hope I shall help her into the holy state too ere long. And when she's once there, if she don't play her part as well as the best of 'em, I'm mistaken.—Han't I lost the letter I'm to give her?—No, here 'tis. So, now we shall see how pure nature will work with her; for art she knows none yet.

Enter CORINNA.

Cor. What does my mother-in-law want with me, Flippanta? They tell me she was asking for me.

Flip. She's just gone out; so I suppose 'twas no great business.

Cor. Then I'll go into my chamber again.

Flip. Nay, hold a little, if you please. I have some business with you myself, of more concern than what she had to say to you.

Cor. Make haste then, for you know my father won't let me keep you company; he says you'll spoil me.

Flip. I spoil you! He's an unworthy man, to give you such ill impressions of a woman of my honour.

Cor. Nay, never take it to heart, Flippanta; for I don't believe a word he says. But he does so plague me with his continual scolding, I'm almost weary of my life.

Flip. Why, what is't he finds fault with?

Cor. Nay, I don't know; for I never mind him; when he has babbled for two hours together, methinks I have heard a mill going, that's all. It does not at all change my opinion, Flippanta, it only makes my head ache.

Flip. Nay, if you can bear it so, you are not to be pitied so much as I thought.

Cor. Not pitied! Why, is it not a miserable thing, such a young creature as I am should be kept in perpetual solitude, with no other company but a parcel of old frightful masters, to teach me geography, arithmetic, philosophy, and a thousand useless things? Fine entertainment indeed for a young girl at sixteen! Methinks one's time might be better employed.

Flip. Those things will improve your wit.

Cor. Fiddle-faddle! han't I wit enough already? My mother-in-law has learn'd none of this trumpery; and is not she as happy as the day is long?

Flip. Then you envy her, I find.

Cor. And well I may. Does she not do what she has a mind to, in spite of her husband's teeth?

Flip. Look you there now. If she has not already conceived that to be the supreme blessing of life.

[*Aside.*

Cor. I'll tell you what, Flippanta, if my mother-in-law would but stand by me a little, and encourage me, and let me keep her company, I'd rebel against my father to-morrow, and throw all my books in the fire. Why, he can't touch a groat of my portion. Do you know that, Flippanta?

Flip. So—I shall spoil her. Pray heaven the girl don't debauch me!

[*Aside.*

Cor. Look you, in short, he may think what he pleases, he may think himself wise; but thoughts are free, and I may think in my turn. I'm but a girl, 'tis true, and a fool too, if you believe him: but let him know, a foolish girl may make a wise man's heart ache; so be had as good be quiet. Now it's out.

Flip. Very well. I love to see a young woman have spirit; it's a sign she'll come to something.

Cor. Ah, Flippanta, if you would but encourage me, you'd find me quite another thing. I wish you'd but let me make one amongst you.

Flip. That never can be, 'till you are married.—Come, examine your strength a little. Do you think you durst venture upon a husband?

Cor. A husband! Why, a——if you would but encourage me. Come, Flippanta, be a true friend now.—I'll give you advice, when I have got a little more experience. Do you, in your very conscience and soul, think I am old enough to be married?

Flip. Old enough! Why, you are sixteen, are you not?

Cor. Sixteen! I am sixteen, two months, and odd days, woman. I keep an exact account.

Flip. The deuce you are!

Cor. Why, do you then truly and sincerely think I am old enough?

Flip. I do, upon my faith, child.

Cor. Why then, to deal as fairly with you, Flippanta, as you do with me, I have thought so any time these three years.

Flip. Now I find you have more wit than ever I thought you had; and to show you what an opinion I have of your discretion, I'll show you a thing I thought to have thrown in the fire.

Cor. What is it, for Jupiter's sake?

Flip. Something will make your heart chuckle within you.

Cor. My dear Flippanta!

Flip. What do you think it is?

Cor. I don't know, nor I don't care; but I'm wad to have it. [*Flippanta shows the Letter*] O Lard, a letter! Is there ever a token in it?

Flip. Yes, and a precious one too. There's a handsome young gentleman's heart.

Cor. A handsome young gentleman's heart! Nay then it's time to look grave. [*Aside.*

Flip. There.

Cor. I shan't touch it.

Flip. What's the matter now?

Cor. I shan't receive it.

Flip. Sure you jest.

Cor. You'll find I don't. I understand myself better than to take letters when I don't know who they are from.

Flip. I'm afraid I commended your wit too soon.

Cor. 'Tis all one, I shan't touch it, unless I know who it comes from.

Flip. Hey-day! open it, and you'll see.

Cor. Indeed I shall not.

Flip. Well—then I must return it where I had it.

Cor. That won't serve your turn, madam; my father must have an account of this.

Flip. Sure you are not in earnest?

Cor. You'll find I am.

Flip. So here's fine work.

Cor. Confess who you had it from, and perhaps, for this once, I mayn't tell my father.

Flip. Why then, since it must out, 'twas the colonel: but why are you so scrupulous, madam?

Cor. Because, if it had come from any body else—I would not have given a farthing for it.

[*Twitches it eagerly out of her Hand.*]

Flip. Ah, my dear little rogue, [*Kisses her*] you frighten'd me out of my wits.

Cor. Let me read it, let me read it, let me read it, let me read it, I say. Um, um, um—*Cupid's*—um, um, um—*darts*—um, um, um—*beauty*—um—*charms*—um, um, um—*angel*—um—*goddess*—um, [*Kisses the Letter*] um, um, um—*truest lover*—um, um—*eternal constancy*—um, um, um—*cruel*—um, um, um—*racks*—um, um, um—*tortures*—um, um—*fifty daggers*—um, um—*bleeding heart*—um, um—*dead man*.—Very well, a mighty civil letter, I promise you; not one naughty word in it. I'll go lock it up in my comb-box.

Flip. Well, but what does he say to you?

Cor. Not a word of news, Flippanta; 'tis all about business.

Flip. Does he not tell you he's in love with you?

Cor. Ay, but he told me that before.

Flip. How so? He never spoke to you!

Cor. He sent me word by his eyes.

Flip. Did he so? Mighty well. I thought you had been to learn that language.

Cor. O, but you thought wrong, Flippanta. What, because I don't go a visiting, and see the world, you think I know nothing. But you should consider, Flippanta, that the more one's alone, the more one thinks; and 'tis thinking that improves a girl. Well, Flippanta, if you'll encourage me——

Flip. O, by all means an answer.

Cor. Well, since you say it then, I'll e'en in and do it, though I protest to you (lest you should think me too forward now), he's the only man that wears a beard, I'd ink my fingers for. May be, if I marry him, in a year or two's time I mayn't be so nice. [*Aside. Exit.*]

Flip. Now heaven give him joy; he's like to have a rare wife o'thee. But where there's money, a man has a plaster to his sore. They have a blessed time on't, who marry for love.——See! here comes an example——Araminta's dread lord.

Enter MONEYTRAP.

Mon. Ah, Flippanta! how do you do, good Flippanta? How do you do?

Flip. Thank you, sir, well, at your service.

Mon. And how does the good family, your master and your fair mistress? Are they at home?

Flip. Neither of them; my master has been gone out these two hours, and my lady is just gone with your wife.

Mon. Well, I won't say I have lost my labour, however, as long as I have met with you, Flippanta; for I have wish'd a great while for an opportunity to talk with you a little. You won't take it amiss, if I should ask you a few questions?

Flip. Provided you leave me to my liberty in my answers.——What's this oot-quean going to pry into now? [*Aside.*]

Mon. Pr'ythee, good Flippanta, how do your master and mistress live together?

Flip. Live!—like man and wife, generally out of humour, complain of one another; and perhaps have both reason. In short, 'tis much as 'tis at your house.

Mon. Good lack! But whose side are you generally of?

Flip. O'the right side always—my lady's. And if you'll have me give you my opinion of those matters, sir, I do not think a husband can ever be in the right.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. Little, pecking, creeping, sneaking, stingy, covetous, cowardly, dirty, cneckoldy things.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. Hark you, sir, shall I deal plainly with you? Had I got a husband, I would put him in mind that he was married as well as I.

Mon. I think you would be in the right on't. But prythee why dost not give this advice to thy mistress?

Flip. For fear it should go round to your wife, sir; for you know they are playfellows.

Mon. O, there's no danger of my wife; she knows I am none of those husbands.

Flip. Are you sure she knows that, sir?

Mon. I'm sure she ought to know it, Flippanta; for really I have but four faults in the world.

Flip. And pray what may they be?

Mon. Why, I'm a little slovenly.

Flip. Fie!

Mon. I am sometimes out of humour.

Flip. Provoking!

Mon. I don't give her so much money as she'd have.

Flip. Insolent!

Mon. And a——perhaps I mayn't be quite so young as I was.

Flip. The devil!

Mon. O, but then consider how 'tis on her side, Flippanta. She ruins me with dressing, is always out of humour, ever wanting money, and will never be older.

Flip. That last article, I must confess, is a little hard upon you.

Mon. Ah, Flippanta, didst thou but know the daily

provocations I have, thoud'st be the first to excuse my faults. But now I think on't, thou art none of my friend, thou dost not love me at all; no, not at all.

Flip. And whither is this little reproach going to lead us now?

Mon. You have power over your fair mistress, Flippanta.

Flip. Sir!

Mon. But what then? you hate me.

Flip. I understand you not.

Mon. There's not a moment's trouble her naughty husband gives her, but I feel it too.

Flip. I don't know what you mean.

Mon. If she did but know what part I take in her sufferings——

Flip. Mighty obscure.

Mon. Well, I'll say no more; but——

Flip. All Hebrew.

Mon. If thou wouldst but tell her on't——

Flip. Still darker and darker.

Mon. I should not be ungrateful.

Flip. Ah, now I begin to understand you.

Mon. Flippanta——there's my purse.

Flip. Say no more; now you explain indeed——you are in love?

Mon. Bitterly—and I do swear, by all the gods——

Flip. Hold!—Spare 'em for another time; you stand in no need of 'em now. An usurer that parts with his purse gives sufficient proof of his sincerity.

Mon. I hate my wife, Flippanta.

Flip. That we'll take upon your bare word.

Mon. She's the devil, Flippanta.

Flip. You like your neighbour's better?

Mon. Oh! an angel!

Flip. What a pity it is the law don't allow changing.

Mon. If it did, Flippanta——

Flip. But since it don't, sir, keep the reins upon your passion; don't let your flame rage too high, lest my lady should be cruel, and it should dry you up to a mummy.

Mon. 'Tis impossible she can be so barbarous, to let me die. Alas, Flippanta, a very small matter would save my life.

Flip. Then you're dead; for we women never grant any thing to a man who will be satisfied with a little.

Mon. Dear Flippanta, that was only my modesty; but since you'll have it out—I am a very dragon; and so your lady will find.—Now I hope you'll stand my friend.

Flip. Well, sir, as far as my credit goes, it shall be employ'd in your service.

Mon. My best Flippanta!—tell her—I'm all hers—tell her—my body's hers—tell her—my soul's hers—and tell her—my estate's hers. Lord have mercy upon me, how I'm in love!

Flip. Poor man!—But hark—I hear my master; for heaven's sake, compose yourself a little.

Mon. Ah dear, I'm in such an emotion, I dare not be seen. [Exit.

Flip. A rare adventurer, by my troth. This will be curious news to the wives. Fortune has now put their husbands into their hands! and I think they are too sharp to neglect its favours.

Enter GRIPE.

Gripe. O, here's the right hand; the rest of the body can't be far off. Where's my wife, hussy?

Flip. An admirable question!—Why, she's gone abroad, sir.

Gripe. Abroad, abroad, abroad, already? Why, she uses to be in her bed three hours after this time, as late as 'tis. What makes her gadding so soon?

Flip. Business, I suppose.

Gripe. Business! she has a pretty head for business truly. O ho, let her change her way of living, or I'll make her change a light heart for a heavy one.

Flip. And why would you have her change her way of living, sir? You see it agrees with her: she never look'd better in her life.

Gripe. Don't tell me of her looks; I have done with.

her looks long since. But I'll make her change her life, or——

Flip. Indeed, sir, you won't.

Gripe. Why, what shall hinder me, insolence?

Flip. That which hinders most husbands; contradiction.

Gripe. Suppose I resolve I won't be contradicted?

Flip. Suppose she resolves you shall?

Gripe. A wife's resolution is not good by law.

Flip. Nor a husband's by custom.

Gripe. I tell thee I will not bear it.

Flip. I tell you, sir, you will bear it.

Gripe. Oons, I have borne it three years already.

Flip. By that, you see, 'tis but giving your mind to it.

Gripe. My mind to it! Death and the devil! My mind to it!——She is then, in thy opinion, a reasonable woman?

Flip. By my faith, I think so.

Gripe. I shall run mad——Name me an extravagance in the world she is not guilty of.

Flip. Name me an extravagance in the world she is guilty of.

Gripe. Come then: does not she put the whole house in disorder?

Flip. Not that I know of; for she never comes into it but to sleep.

Gripe. 'Tis very well:—does she employ any one moment of her life in the government of her family?

Flip. She is so submissive a wife, she leaves it entirely to you.

Gripe. Admirable!—Does not she spend more money in coach hire and chair hire, than would maintain six children?

Flip. She's too nice of your credit to be seen daggling in the street.

Gripe. Good!—Do I set eye on her sometimes for a week together?

Flip. That, sir, is because you are never stirring at the same time; you keep odd hours; you are always

going to bed when she's rising, and rising just when she's coming to bed.

Gripe. Yes, truly, night into day, and day into night; that's her trade: but these are trifles:—has she not lost her diamond necklace? Answer me to that, trapes.

Flip. Yes; and has sent as many tears after it, as if it had been her husband.

Gripe. Ah! the devil take her!—but enough. 'Tis resolved, and I will put a stop to her course of life; and so she shall know, the first time I meet with her;—which, though we are man and wife, and lie under one roof, 'tis very possible may not be this fortnight.

[*Aside.* Exit.

Flip. Nay, thou hast a blessed time on't, that must be confessed. What a miserable devil is a husband! insupportable to himself, and a plague to every thing about him. But he'd as good be still, for he'll miss his aim. If I know her (which I think I do), she'll set his blood in such a ferment, it shall bubble out at every pore of him; whilst hers is so quiet in her veins, her pulse shall go like a pendulum. [Exit.

ACT THE THIRD.



SCENE I. MRS. AMLET's House.

Enter DICK.

Dick. Where's this old woman?—A-hey! What the devil, nobody at home!—Ha! her strong box!—and the key in't!—'tis so. Now, fortune, be my friend. [*Searches the strong Box*] What the deuce—not a penny of money in cash!—nor a checker note!—nor a bank-bill!—nor a crooked stick!—nor a—Mum—here's something—a diamond necklace, by all the gods!—Oons, the old woman!—Zest!

[Puts the Necklace in his Pocket.]

Enter MRS. AMLET. DICK runs and asks her Blessing.

Mrs. A. Is it possible? Dick upon his humble knee! Ah! my dear child! may heaven be good unto thee!

Dick. I'm come, my dear mother, to pay my duty to you, and to ask your consent to—

Mrs. A. What a shape is there!

Dick. To ask your consent, I say, to marry a great fortune; for what is riches in this world, without a blessing? and how can there be a blessing, without respect and duty to parents?

Mrs. A. What a nose he has!

Dick. And therefore, it being the duty of every good child not to dispose of himself in marriage without the——

Mrs. A. Now the Lord love thee, [*Kisses him*] for thou art a goodly young man. Well, Dick, and how goes it with the lady? Are her eyes open to thy charms? Does she see what's for her own good? Is she sensible of the blessings thou hast in store for her? Ha! is all sure? Hast thou broke a piece of money with her?—Speak, bird; do: don't be modest, and hide thy love from thy mother; for I'm an indulgent parent.

Dick. Nothing under heaven can prevent my good fortune, but its being discovered I am your son.

Mrs. A. Then thou art still asham'd of thy natural mother, graceless? Why, I'm no harlot, sirrah.

Dick. I know you are not.—Who the devil would make you one? [*Aside.*

Mrs. A. No, my reputation's as good as the best of them; and though I am old, I'm chaste, you rascal you.

Dick. Lord, that is not the thing we talk of, mother; but——

Mrs. A. I think, as the world goes, they may be proud of marrying their daughter into a virtuous family.

Dick. Oons, virtue is not the case——

Mrs. A. Where she may have a good example before her eyes.

Dick. O Lord! O Lord! O Lord!

Mrs. A. I'm a woman that don't so much as encourage an incontinent look towards me.

Dick. I tell you, s'death, I tell you——

Mrs. A. If a man should make an unevill motion to me, I'd spit in his face: and all this you may tell them, sirrah.

Dick. Death and furies! the woman's out of her——

Mrs. A. Don't you swear, you rascal you, don't you swear.

Dick. Why then in cold blood hear me speak to you : I tell you it's a city fortune I'm about ; she cares not a fig for your virtue ; she'll hear of nothing but quality ; she has quarrelled with one of her friends for having a better complexion, and is resolved she'll marry, to take place of her.

Mrs. A. What a cherry lip is there !

Dick. Therefore, good, dear mother, now have a care, and don't discover me ; for if you do, all's lost.

Mrs. A. Dear, dear, how thy fair bride will be delighted !—Go, get thee gone, go—go, fetch her home—go, fetch her home. I'll give her a sack posset, and a pillow of down she shall lay her head upon. Go, fetch her home, I say.

Dick. Take care then of the main chance, my dear mother ; remember, if you discover me——

Mrs. A. Go fetch her home, I say.

Dick. You promise me then——

Mrs. A. March !

Dick. But swear to me——

Mrs. A. Be gone, sirrah.

Dick. Well, I'll rely upon you.—But one kiss before I go. [Kisses her heartily, and runs off.

Mrs. A. Now the Lord love thee ; for thou art a comfortable young man. [Exit.

SCENE II. GRIPE'S House.

Enter CORINNA and FLIPPANTA.

Cor. But hark you, Flippanta, if you don't think he loves me dearly, don't give him my letter, after all.

Flip. Let me alone.

Cor. When he has read it, let him give it you again.

Flip. Don't trouble yourself.

Cor. But remember 'tis you make me do all this now ; so if any mischief comes on't, 'tis you must answer for't.

Flip. I'll be your security.

Cor. I'm young, and know nothing of the matter; but you have experience, so it is your business to conduct me safe.

Flip. Poor innocence!

Cor. But tell me, in serious sadness, Flippanta, does he love me with the very soul of him?

Flip. I have told you so an hundred times, and yet you are not satisfied.

Cor. But methinks I'd fain have him tell me so himself.

Flip. Have patience, and it shall be done.

Cor. Why, patience is a virtue, that we must all confess; but I fancy the sooner it's done the better, Flippanta.

Enter JESSAMIN.

Jes. Madam, yonder's your geography-master waiting for you. [Exit.

Cor. Ah! how I am tired with these old fumbling fellows, Flippanta.

Flip. Well, don't let them break your heart; you shall be rid of them all ere long.

Cor. Nay, 'tis not the study I'm so weary of, Flippanta; 'tis the odious thing that teaches me. Were the colonel my master, I fancy I could take pleasure in learning every thing he could show me.

Flip. And he can show you a great deal, I can tell you that. But get you in, here's somebody coming; we must not be seen together.

Cor. I will, I will, I will.—O the dear colonel!

[Runs off.

Enter MRS. AMLET.

Flip. O ho, it's Mrs. Amlet.—What brings you so soon to us again, Mrs. Amlet?

Mrs. A. Ah, my dear Mrs. Flippanta, I'm in a furious fright.

Flip. Why, what's come to you?

Mrs. A. Ah! mercy on us all!—Madam's diamond necklace—

Flip. What of that?

Mrs. A. Are you sure you left it in my house?

Flip. Sure I left it! a very pretty question, truly!

Mrs. A. Nay, don't be angry; say nothing to madam of it, I beseech you: it will be found again, if it be heaven's good will. At least, 'tis I must bear the loss of it. 'Tis my rogue of a son has laid his bird-like fingers on't.

Flip. Your son, Mrs. Amlet? Do you breed your children up to such tricks as these then?

Mrs. A. What shall I say to you, Mrs. Flippanta? Can I help it? He has been a rogue from his cradle, Dick has. But he has his deserts too. And now it comes in my head, mayhap he may have no ill design in this neither.

Flip. No ill design, woman? He's a pretty fellow, if he can steal a diamond necklace with a good one.

Mrs. A. You don't know him, Mrs. Flippanta, so well as I that bore him. Dick's a rogue, 'tis true, but—Mum—

Flip. What does the woman mean?

Mrs. A. Hark you, Mrs. Flippanta, is not here a young gentlewoman in your house that wants a husband?

Flip. Why do you ask?

Mrs. A. By way of conversation only, it does not concern me; but when she marries I may chance to dance at the wedding. Remember, I tell you so; I, who am but Mrs. Amlet.

Flip. You dance at her wedding! you?

Mrs. A. Yes, I, I; but don't trouble madam about her necklace, perhaps it mayn't go out of the family. Adieu, Mrs. Flippanta. [Exit.]

Flip. What—what—what does the woman mean? The necklace lost; and her son Dick; and a fortune to marry; and she shall dance at the wedding; and—She does not intend, I hope, to propose a match between her son Dick and Corinna? By my conscience I believe she does. An old beldam!

Enter BRASS.

Brass. Well, hussy, how stand our affairs? Has

miss writ us an answer yet? My master's very impatient yonder.

Flip. And why the deuce does not he come himself? Why does he send such idle fellows as thee of his errands? Here I had her alone just now: he won't have such an opportunity again this month, I can tell him that.

Brass. So much the worse for him; 'tis his business—But now, my dear, let thee and I talk a little of our own: I grow most damnably in love with thee, dost hear that?

Flip. Phe! thou art always timing things wrong; my head is full at present of more important things than love.

Brass. Then it's full of important things indeed. Dost want a privy counsellor?

Flip. I want an assistant.

Brass. To do what?

Flip. Mischief.

Brass. I am thy man—touch.

Flip. But before I venture to let thee into my project, pr'ythee tell me whether thou find'st a natural disposition to ruin a husband to oblige his wife?

Brass. Is she handsome?

Flip. Yes.

Brass. Why then my disposition's at her service.

Flip. She's beholden to thee.

Brass. Not she alone, neither; therefore don't let her grow vain upon it! for I have three or four affairs of that kind going at this time.

Flip. Well, go carry this epistle from miss to thy master; and when thou com'st back, I'll tell thee thy business.

Brass. I'll know it before I go, if you please.

Flip. Thy master waits for an answer.

Brass. I'd rather he should wait than I.

Flip. Why then, in short, Araminta's husband is in love with my lady.

Brass. Very well, child, we have a Rowland for her Oliver: thy lady's husband is in love with Araminta.

Flip. Who told you that, sirrah?

Brass. 'Tis a negociation I am charged with, pert. Did not I tell thee, I did business for half the town? I have managed master Gripe's little affairs for him these ten years, you slut you.

Flip. Hark thee, Brass, the game's in our hands, if we can but play the cards.

Brass. Pique and repique, you jade you, if the wives will fall into a good intelligence.

Flip. Let them alone; I'll answer for them they don't slip the occasion—See here they come. They little think what a piece of good news we have for them.

Re-enter JESSAMIN, with CLARISSA, and ARAMINTA.

Cla. Jessamin! here, boy, carry up these things into my dressing-room, and break as many of them by the way as you can, be sure.

Jes. Yes, ma'am.

[Exit.

Cla. O! art thou there, Brass? What news?

Brass. Madam, I only call'd in as I was going by.—But some little propositions Mrs. Flippanta has been starting, have kept me here to offer your ladyship my humble service.

Cla. What propositions?

Brass. She'll acquaint you, madam.

Ara. Is there any thing new, Flippanta?

Flip. Yes, and pretty too.

Cla. That follows of course; but let's have it quick.

Flip. Why, madam, you have made a conquest.

Cla. Hussy—But of who? quick.

Flip. Of Mr. Moneytrap, that's all.

Ara. My husband?

Flip. Yes, your husband, madam: you thought fit to corrupt ours, so now we are even with you.

Ara. Sure thou art in jest, Flippanta.

Flip. Serious as my devotions.

Brass. And the cross intrigue, ladies, is what our brains have been at work about.

Ara. The stars have done this.

Cla. The pretty little twinklers.

Flip. And what will you do for them now?

Cla. What grateful creatures ought; show 'em we don't despise their favours.

Ara. But is not this a wager between these two blockheads?

Cla. I would not give a shilling to go the winner's halves.

Ara. Then 'tis the most fortunate thing that ever could have happened.

Cla. All your last night's ideas, Araminta, were trifles to it.

Ara. Brass, my dear, will be useful to us.

Brass. At your service, madam.

Cla. Flippanta will be necessary, my life!

Flip. She waits your commands, madam.

Ara. For my part then I recommend my husband to thee, Flippanta; and make it my earnest request thou won't leave him one half-crown.

Flip. I'll do all I can to obey you, madam.

Brass. If your ladyship would give me the same kind orders for yours. [To Clarissa.

Cla. O—if thou spar'st him, Brass, I'm thy enemy till I die.

Brass. 'Tis enough, madam, I'll be sure to give you a reasonable account of him. But how do you intend we shall proceed, ladies? Must we storm the purse at once, or break ground in form, and carry it by little and little?

Cla. Storm, dear Brass, storm: ever whilst you live, storm.

Ara. O, by all means; must it not be so, Flippanta?

Flip. In four-and-twenty hours, two hundred pounds a-piece, that's my sentence.

Brass. Very well. But, ladies, you'll give me leave to put you in mind of some little expense in favours, 'twill be necessary you are at, to these honest gentlemen.

Ara. Favours, Brass?

Brass. Um—a—some small matters, madam, I doubt must be—

Cla. Now, that's a vile article, Araminta; for that thing, your husband, is so like mine——

Flip. Phu, there's a scruple indeed. Why what, in the name of Lucifer, is it you have to do, that's so terrible?

Brass. A civil look only.

Ara. There's no great harm in that.

Flip. An obliging word.

Cla. That one may afford 'em.

Brass. A little smile, apropos.

Ara. That's but giving one's self an air.

Flip. Receive a little letter perhaps.

Cla. Women of quality do that from fifty odious fellows.

Brass. Suffer (may be) a squeeze by the hand.

Ara. One's so used to that, one does not feel it.

Flip. Or if a kiss would do't.

Cla. I'd die first.

Brass. Indeed, ladies, I doubt 'twill be necessary to——

Cla. Get their wretched money without paying so dear for it.

Flip. Well, just as you please for that, my ladies: but I suppose you'll play upon the square with your favour, and not pique yourselves upon one being more grateful than another?

Brass. And state a fair account of receipts and disbursements.

Ara. That I think should be, indeed.

Cla. With all my heart, and Brass shall be our book-keeper. So get thee to work, man, as fast as thou canst; but not a word of all this to thy master.

Brass. I'll observe my order, madam. [Exit.

Cla. I'll have the pleasure of telling him myself: he'll be violently delighted with it: 'tis the best man in the world, Araminta; he'll bring us rare company to-morrow, all sorts of gamesters; and thou shalt see my husband will be such a beast to be out of humour at it.

Ara. The monster—But hush, here's my dear approaching: pr'ythee let's leave him to Flippanta.

Flip. Ay, pray do: I'll bring you a good account of him, I'll warrant you.

Cla. Dispatch then, for the pharo-table's in haste.

[Exit with *Araminta*.]

Flip. So, now have at him; here he comes: we'll try if we can pillage the usurer, as he does other folks.

Enter MONEYTRAP.

Mon. Well, my pretty Flippanta, is thy mistress come home?

Flip. Yes, sir.

Mon. And where is she, pr'ythee?

Flip. Gone abroad, sir.

Mon. How dost mean?

Flip. I mean right, sir; my lady will come home and go abroad ten times in an hour, when she is either in very good humour, or very bad.

Mon. Good lack! But I'll warrant, in general, 'tis her naughty husband that makes her house uneasy to her.—But hast thou said a little something to her, chicken, for an expiring lover? ha?

Flip. Said——yes, I have said——much good may it do me.

Mon. Well! and how?

Flip. And how?——And how do you think you would have me do it? and you have such a way with you one can refuse you nothing. But I have brought myself into a fine business by it.

Mon. Good lack!——But I hope, Flippanta——

Flip. Yes, your hopes will do much, when I am turn'd out of doors.

Mon. Was she then terribly angry?

Flip. Oh! had you seen how she flew, when she saw where I was pointing; for you must know I went round the bush, and round the bush, before I came to the matter.

Mon. Nay, 'tis a ticklish point, that must be own'd.

Flip. On my word it is—I mean where a lady's truly virtuous; for that's our case, you must know.

Mon. A very dangerous case indeed.

Flip. But I can tell you one thing—she has an inclination to you.

Mon. Is it possible?

Flip. Yes, and I told her so at last.

Mon. Well, and what did she answer thee?

Flip. Slap—and bid me bring it to you for a token.

[Giving him a slap on the Face.

Mon. And you have lost none on't by the way, with a plague t'ye. [Aside.

Flip. Now this, I think, looks the best in the world.

Mon. Yea, but really it feels a little oddly.

Flip. Why, you must know ladies have different ways of expressing their kindness, according to the humour they are in: if she had been in a good one, it had been a kiss; but as long as she sent you something, your affairs go well.

Mon. Why, truly, I am a little ignorant in the mysterious paths of love; so I must be guided by thee. But, pr'ythee, take her in a good humour next token she sends me.

Flip. Ah—good humour.

Mon. What's the matter?

Flip. Poor lady!—If I durst tell you all—

Mon. What then?

Flip. You would not expect to see her in one a good while.

Mon. Why, I pray?

Flip. I must own I did take an unseasonable time to talk of love matters to her.

Mon. Why, what's the matter?

Flip. Nothing.

Mon. Nay, pr'ythee tell me.

Flip. I dare not.

Mon. You must indeed.

Flip. Why when women are in difficulties, how can they think of pleasure?

Mon. Why, what difficulties can she be in?

Flip. Nay, I do but guess, after all; for she has that grandeur of soul, she'd die before she'd tell.

Mon. But what dost thou suspect?

Flip. Why, what should one suspect, where a husband loves nothing but getting of money, and a wife nothing but spending on't?

Mon. So she wants that same then?

Flip. I say no such thing, I know nothing of the matter; pray make no wrong interpretation of what I say; my lady wants nothing that I know of. 'Tis true—she has had ill luck at cards of late, I believe she has not won once this month: but what of that?

Mon. Ha!

Flip. 'Tis true, I know her spirit's that, she'd see her husband hang'd before she'd ask him for a farthing.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. And then I know him again, he'd see her drown'd before he'd give her a farthing; but that's a help to your affair, you know.

Mon. 'Tis so, indeed.

Flip. Ah—well, I'll say nothing; but if she had none of these things to fret her——

Mon. Why really, Flippanta——

Flip. I know what you are going to say now; you are going to offer your service, but 'twon't do; you have a mind to play the gallant now, but it must not be; you want to be showing your liberality, but 'twon't be allow'd; you'll be pressing me to offer it, and she'll be in a rage. We shall have the devil to do.

Mon. You mistake me, Flippanta; I was only going to say——

Flip. Ay, I know what you were going to say, well enough; but I tell you it will never do so. If one could find out some way now——ay——let me see——

Mon. Indeed, I hope——

Flip. Pray be quiet——no——but I'm thinking——hmm——she'll smoke that though——let us consider——If one could find a way to——'Tis the nicest point in the world to bring about; she'll never touch it if she knows from whence it comes.

Mon. Shall I try if I can reason her husband out of twenty pounds, to make her easy the rest of her life?

Flip. Twenty pounds, man!——why you shall see

her set that upon a card. O—she has a great soul.— Besides, if her husband should oblige her, it might in time take off her aversion to him, and, by consequence, her inclination to you. No, no, it must never come that way.

Mon. What shall we do then?

Flip. Hold still—I have it. I'll tell you what you shall do.

Mon. Ay.

Flip. You shall make her—a restitution——of two hundred pounds.

Mon. Ha!——a restitution!

Flip. Yes, yes, 'tis the luckiest thought in the world: madam often plays, you know; and folks who do, meet now and then with sharpers.—Now you shall be a sharper.

Mon. A sharper!

Flip. Ay, ay, a sharper; and having cheated her of two hundred pounds, shall be troubled in mind, and send it her back again. You comprehend me?

Mon. Yes, I, I comprehend, but a—won't she suspect if it be so much?

Flip. No, no, the more the better.

Mon. Two hundred pounds?

Flip. Yes, two hundred pounds—Or, let me see—so even a sum may look a little suspicious—ay—let it be two hundred and thirty; that odd thirty will make it look so natural, the devil won't find it out.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. Pounds too, look I don't know how; guineas, I fancy, were better—ay, guineas, it shall be guineas. You are of that mind, are you not?

Mon. Um—a guinea you know, Flippanta, is—

Flip. A thousand times genteeler: you are certainly in the right on't; it shall be as you say, two hundred and thirty guineas.

Mon. Ho—well, if it must be guineas, let's see, two hundred guineas.

Flip. And thirty; two hundred and thirty: if you

mistake the sum, you spoil all. So go put them in a purse, while it's fresh in your head, and send 'em to me, with a penitent letter, desiring I'll do you the favour to restore them to her.

Mon. Two hundred and thirty pounds in a bag!

Flip. Guineas, I say, guineas.

Mon. Ay, guineas, that's true. But, Flippanta, if she don't know they come from me, then I give my money for nothing, you know.

Flip. Phu! leave that to me, I'll manage the stock for you; I'll make it produce something, I'll warrant you.

Mon. Well, Flippanta, 'tis a great sum indeed; but I'll go try what I can do for her. You say, two hundred guineas in a purse?

Flip. And thirty; if the man's in his senses.

Mon. And thirty, 'tis true; I always forget that thirty.

[Exit.

Flip. So, get thee gone, thou art a rare fellow, i'faith. Brass! it's thee, is't not?

Re-enter BRASS.

Brass. It is, housewife. How go matters? I staid till thy gentleman was gone. Hast done any thing towards our common purse?

Flip. I think I have; he's going to make us a restitution of two or three hundred pounds.

Brass. A restitution!—good.

Flip. A new way, sirrah, to make a lady take a present without putting her to the blush.

Brass. 'Tis very well, mighty well indeed. Pr'ythee where's thy master? let me try if I can persuade him to be troubled in mind too.

Flip. Not so hasty; he's gone into his closet to prepare himself for a quarrel, I have advis'd him to—with his wife.

Brass. What to do?

Flip. Why, to make her stay at home, now she has resolved to do it beforehand. You must know, sirrah,

we intend to make a merit of our pharo bank, and get a good pretence for the merry companions we intend to fill his house with.

Brass. Very nicely spun, truly; thy husband will be a happy man.

Flip. Hold your tongue, you fool you. See here comes your master.

Brass. He's welcome.

Enter Dick.

Dick. My dear Flippanta! how many thanks have I to pay thee?

Flip. Do you like her style?

Dick. The kindest little rogue! there's nothing but she gives me leave to hope. I am the happiest man the world has in its care.

Flip. Not so happy as you think for neither, perhaps; you have a rival, sir, I can tell you that.

Dick. A rival?

Flip. Yes, and a dangerous one too.

Dick. Who, in the name of terror?

Flip. A devilish fellow, one Mr. Amlet.

Dick. Amlet! I know no such man.

Flip. You know the man's mother though; you met her here, and are in her favour, I can tell you. If he worst you in your mistress, you shall e'en marry her, and disinherit him.

Dick. If I have no other rival but Mr. Amlet, I believe I shan't be much disturb'd in my amour. But can't I see Corinna?

Flip. I don't know; she has always some of her masters with her: but I'll go see if she can spare you a moment, and bring you word. *[Exit.]*

Dick. I wish my old hobbling mother han't been blabbing something here she should not do.

Brass. Fear nothing, all's safe on that side yet. But how speaks young mistress's epistle? soft and tender?

Dick. As pen can write.

Brass. So you think all goes well there?

Dick. As my heart can wish.

Brass. You are sure on't?

Dick. Sure on't!

Brass. Why then, ceremony aside—[*Putting on his Hat*—you and I must have a little talk, Mr. Amlet.

Dick. Ah, Brass, what art thou going to do? wo't ruin me?

Brass. Look you, Dick, few words; you are in a smooth way of making your fortune; I hope all will roll on. But how do you intend matters shall pass 'twixt you and me in this business?

Dick. Death and suries! What a time dost take to talk on't?

Brass. Good words; or I betray you; they have already heard of one Mr. Amlet in the house.

Dick. Here's a son of a whore. [*Aside.*

Brass. In short, look smooth, and be a good prince. I am your valet, 'tis true: your footman, sometimes, which I'm enraged at; but you have always had the ascendant I confess: when we were schoolfellows, you made me carry your books, make your exercise, own your rogueries, and sometimes take a whipping for you. When we were fellow-'prentices, though I was your senior, you made me open the shop, clean my master's shoes, cut last at dinner, and eat all the crust. In our sins too, I must own you still kept me under; you soar'd up to adultery with the mistress, while I was at humble fornication with the maid. Nay, in our punishments you still made good your post; for when once upon a time I was sentenced but to be whipp'd, I cannot deny but you were condemn'd to be hang'd. So that in all times, I must confess, your inclinations have been greater and nobler than mine; however, I cannot consent that you should at once fix fortune for life, and I dwell in my humilities for the rest of my days.

Dick. Hark thee, Brass, if I do not most nobly by thee, I'm a dog.

Brass. And when?

Dick. As soon as ever I am married.

Brass. Ay, the plague take thee.

Dick. When you mistrust me?

Brass. I do, by my faith. Look you, sir, some folks we mistrust, because we don't know them: others we mistrust, because we do know them: and for one of these reasons I desire there may be a bargain beforehand: if not [*Raising his Voice*] lookye, Dick Amlet—

Dick. Soft, my dear friend and companion. The dog will ruin me. [*Aside*] Say, what is't will content thee?

Brass. O ho!

Dick. But how canst thou be such a barbarian?

Brass. I learnt it at Algiers.

Dick. Come, make thy Turkish demand then.

Brass. You know you gave me a bank-bill this morning to receive for you.

Dick. I did so, of fifty pounds; 'tis thine. So, now thou art satisfied; all is fixed.

Brass. It is not indeed. There's a diamond necklace you robb'd your mother of e'en now.

Dick. Ah, you Jew!

Brass. No words.

Dick. My dear Brass!

Brass. I insist.

Dick. My old friend!

Brass. Dick Amlet [*Raising his Voice*] I insist.

Dick. Ah, the cormorant [*Aside*—Well, 'tis thine: thou'lt never thrive with it.

Brass. When I find it begins to do me mischief, I'll give it you again. But I must have a wedding suit.

Dick. Well.

Brass. A stock of linen.

Dick. Enough.

Brass. Not yet—a silver-hilted sword.

Dick. Well, thou shalt have that too. Now thou hast every thing.

Brass. Heav'n forgive me, I forgot a ring of remembrance. I would not forget all these favours for the world: a sparkling diamond will be always playing in my eye, and put me in mind of them.

Dick. This unconscionable rogue! [*Asiat.*] Well, I'll bespeak one for thee.

Brass. Brilliant.

Dick. It shall. But if the thing don't succeed after all——

Brass. I am a man of honour and restore: and so, treaty being finish'd, I strike my flag of defiance, and fall into my respects again. [*Takes off his Hat.*]

Re-enter FLIPPANTA.

Flip. I have made you wait a little, but I could not help it, her master is but just gone. He has been showing her prince Eugene's march into Italy; but if you'll slip up those back stairs, you shall try if you can agree upon the journey.

Dick. My dear Flippanta!

Flip. None of your dear acknowledgments, I beseech you, but up stairs as hard as you can drive.

Dick. I'm gone.

[*Exit.*]

Flip. And do you follow him, Jack-a-dandy, and see he is not surprised.

Brass. I thought that was your post, Mrs. Useful: but if you'll come and keep me in humour, I don't care if I share the duty with you.

Flip. No words, sirrah, but follow him, I have somewhat else to do.

Brass. The jade's so absolute there's no contesting with her.

[*Exit.*]

Flip. An impudent rogue. But let me see, what have I to do now? This restitution will be here quickly, I suppose: in the mean time, I'll go know if my lady's ready for the quarrel yet. Master, yonder, is so full on't, he's ready to burst; but we'll give him vent by-and-by, with a witness.

[*Exit.*]

ACT THE FOURTH.



SCENE I. *GRIPE's House.*

Enter CORINNA, DICK, and BRASS.

Brass. Don't fear, I'll give you timely notice.

[Goes to the Door.]

Dick. Come, you must consent, you shall consent.—
How can you leave me thus upon the rack? A man
who loves you to that excess that I do.

Cor. Nay, that you love me, sir, that I am satisfied
in, for you have sworn you do: and I'm so pleas'd
with it, I'd fain have you do so as long as I live, so we
must never marry.

Dick. Not marry, my dear? why, what's our love
good for, if we don't marry?

Cor. Ah—I'm afraid it will be good for little, if
we do.

Dick. Why do you think so?

Cor. Because I hear my father and mother, and my
uncle and aunt, and Araminta and her husband, and
twenty other married folks, say so from morning to
night.

Dick. Oh, that's because they are bad husbands and bad wives; but in our case there will be a good husband and a good wife, and so we shall love for ever.

Cor. Why, there may be something in that truly; and I'm always willing to hear reason, as a reasonable young woman ought to do. But are you sure, sir, though we are very good now, we shall be so when we come to be better acquainted?

Dick. I can answer for myself at least.

Cor. I wish you could answer for me too. You see I am a plain dealer, sir; I hope you don't like me the worse for it?

Dick. O, by no means, 'tis a sign of admirable morals; and I hope, since you practise it yourself, you'll approve of it in your lover. In one word, therefore (for 'tis in vain to mince the matter), my resolution's fix'd, and the world can't stagger me, I marry—or I die.

Cor. That's very fine.—Indeed, sir, I have much ado to believe you: the disease of love is seldom so violent.

Dick. Madam, I have two diseases to end my miseries; if the first don't do't, the latter shall: [*Draws his Sword*] one's in my heart, t'other's in my scabbard.

Cor. Not for a diadem. [*Catches hold of him*] Ah, put it up, put it up.

Dick. How absolute is your command! [*Drops his Sword*] A word, you see, disarms me.

Cor. What a power I have over him! The wondrous deeds of love! [*Aside*—Pray, sir, let me have no more of these rash doings though: perhaps I mayn't be always in the saving humour.—I'm sure, if I had let him stick himself, I should have been envy'd by all the great ladies in the town. [*Aside.*

Dick. Well, madam, have I then your promise, you'll make me the happiest of mankind?

Cor. I don't know what to say to you; but I believe I had as good promise, for I find I shall certainly do't.

Dick. Then let us seal the contract thus. [*Kisses her.*

Cor. Um—He has almost taken away my breath: he kisses purely. [*Aside*

Dick. Hark! somebody comes.

Brass. [*Peeps in*] Guard there the enemy.—No, hold, you're safe—'tis Flippanta.

Enter FLIPPANTA.

Flip. Come, have you agreed the matter? If not, you must end it another time, for your father's in motion; so pray kiss and part.

Cor. That's sweet and sour. [*They kiss*] Adieu t'ye, sir. [*Exeunt Dick and Corinna.*]

Enter CLARISSA.

Cla. Have you told him I'm at home, Flippanta?

Flip. Yes, madam.

Cla. And that I'll see him?

Flip. Yes, that too.—But here's news for you: I have just now received the restitution.

Cla. That's killing pleasure. And how much has he restored me?

Flip. Two hundred and thirty.

Cla. Wretched rogue!—But retreat; your master's coming to quarrel.

Flip. I'll be within call, if things run high. [*Exit.*]

Enter GRIPE.

Gripe. O ho!—are you there, i'faith?—Madam, your humble servant. I'm very glad to see you at home; I thought I should never have had that honour again.

Cla. Good morrow, my dear, how d'ye do? Flippanta says you are out of humour, and that you have a mind to quarrel with me. Is it true, ha?—I have a terrible pain in my head, I give you notice on't beforehand.

Gripe. And how the plague should it be otherwise? It's a wonder you are not dead—as I would you were, [*Aside*] with the life you lead. Are you not ashamed? and do you not blush to—

Cla. My dear child, you crack my brain; soften the harshness of your voice; say what thou wilt; but let it be in an agreeable tone.

Gripe. Tone, madam! don't tell me of a tone!

Cla. O, if you will quarrel, do it with temperance; let it be all in cool blood, even and smooth, as if you were not moved with what you said; and then I'll hear you, as if I were not moved with it neither.

Gripe. Had ever man such need of patience?—Madam, madam, I must tell you, madam——

Cla. Another key, or I'll walk off.

Gripe. Don't provoke me.

Cla. Shall you be long, my dear, in your remonstrances?

Gripe. Yes, madam, and very long.

Cla. If you would quarrel, en abregée, I should have a world of obligation to you.

Gripe. What I have to say, forsooth, is not to be expressed en abregée; my complaints are too numerous.

Cla. Complaints!—of what, my dear?—What have you in the world to disturb you?

Gripe. What have I to disturb me? I have you, death, and the devil!

Cla. Ay, merciful heaven! how he swears! You should never accustom yourself to such words as these; indeed, my dear, you should not; your mouth's always full of them.

Gripe. Blood and thunder, madam——

Cla. Ah, he'll fetch the house down! Do you know you make me tremble for you?—Flippanta!—Who's there?—Flippanta!

Gripe. Here's a provoking devil for you!

Re-enter FLIPPANTA.

Flip. What, in the name of Jove's, the matter? You raise the neighbourhood.

Cla. Why, here's your master in a most violent fuss, and no mortal soul can tell for what.

Gripe. Not tell for what?

Cla. No, my life:—I have begg'd him to tell me his griefs, Flippanta; and then he swears—good Lord! how he does swear.

Gripe. Ah, you wicked jade! Ah, you wicked jade!

Cla. Do you hear him, Flippanta? Do you hear him?

Flip. Pray, sir, let's know a little what puts you in all this fury?

Cla. Pr'ythee stand near me, Flippanta; there's an odd froth about his mouth, looks as-if his poor head were going wrong. I'm afraid he'll bite.

Gripe. The wicked woman, Flippanta! the wicked woman!

Cla. Can any body wonder I shun my own house, when he treats me at this rate in it?

Gripe. At this rate! Why, in the devil's name——

Cla. Do you hear him again?

Flip. Come, a little moderation, sir; and try what that will produce.

Gripe. Hang her! 'tis all a pretence, to justify her going abroad.

Cla. A pretence! a pretence! Do you hear how black a charge he loads me with? Charges me with a pretence! Is this the return for all my downright, open actions?—You know, my dear, I scorn pretences:—whene'er I go, it is without pretence.

Gripe. Give me patience!

Flip. You have a great deal, sir.

Cla. And yet he's never content, Flippanta.

Gripe. What shall I do?

Cla. What a reasonable man would do; own yourself in the wrong, and be quiet. Here's Flippanta has understanding, and I have moderation; I'm willing to make her judge of our differences.

Flip. You do me a great deal of honour, madam: but I tell you beforehand, I shall be a little on master's side.

Gripe. Right, Flippanta has sense. Come, let her decide. Have I not reason to be in a passion? tell me that.

Cla. You must tell her for what, my life.

Gripe. Why, for the trade you drive, my soul.

Flip. Look you, sir, pray take things right; I know madam does fret you a little now and then, that's true;

but in the main she is the softest, sweetest, gentlest lady breathing. Let her but live entirely to her own fancy, and she'll never say a word to you from morning to night.

Gripe. Oons! let her but stay at home, and she shall do what she will; in reason, that is.

Flip. D'ye hear that, madam? Nay, now I must be on master's side: you see how he loves you, he desires only your company: pray give him that satisfaction, or I must pronounce against you.

Cla. Well, I agree. Thou know'st I don't love to grieve him: let him be always in good humour, and I'll be always at home.

Flip. Look you there, sir; what would you have more?

Gripe. Well, let her keep her word, and I'll have done quarrelling.

Cla. I must not, however, so far lose the merit of my consent, as to let you think I am weary of going abroad, my dear: what I do is purely to oblige you; which, that I may be able to perform, without a relapse, I'll invent what ways I can to make my prison supportable to me.

Flip. Her prison! pretty bird!—her prison!—Don't that word melt you, sir?

Gripe. I must confess I did not expect to find her so reasonable.

Flip. O, sir, soon or late, wives come into good humour: husbands must only have a little patience to wait for it.

Cla. The innocent little diversions, dear, that I shall content myself with, will be chiefly play and company.

Gripe. O, I'll find you employment, your time shan't lie upon your hands; though if you have a mind now for such a companion as a——let me see——Araminta, for example; why, I shan't be against her being with you from morning till night.

Cla. You can't oblige me more; 'tis the best woman in the world.

Gripe. Is not she?

Cla. Then, my dear, to make our home pleasant, we'll have concerts of music sometimes.

Gripe. Music, in my house!

Cla. Yes, my child, we must have music, or the house will be so dull I shall get the spleen, and be going abroad again.

Flip. Nay, she has so much complaisance for you, sir, you can't dispute such things with her.

Gripe. Ay, but if I have music——

Cla. Ay but, sir, I must have music.

Flip. Not every day, madam don't mean.

Cla. No, bless me, no; but three concerts a week: three days more we'll play, after dinner, at ombre, piquet, basset, pharo, and so forth; and close the evening with a handsome supper and a ball.

Gripe. A ball!

Flip. What order you see 'tis she purposes to live in! A most wonderful regularity!

Cla. And as this kind of life, so soft, so smooth, so agreeable, must needs invite a vast deal of company to partake of it, 'twill be necessary to have the decency of a porter at our door, you know.

Gripe. A porter!——A scrivener have a porter, madam?

Cla. Positively, a porter.

Gripe. Why, no scrivener, since Adam, ever had a porter, woman!

Cla. You will therefore be renowned in story for having the first, my life.

Gripe. Flippanta——

Flip. Hang it, sir, never dispute a trifle; if you vex her, perhaps she'll insist upon a Swiss.

[*Apart to Gripe.*

Gripe. But, madam——

Cla. But, sir, a porter, positively a porter; without that, the treaty's null, and I go abroad this moment.

Flip. Come, sir, never lose so advantageous a peace for a pitiful porter.

Gripe. Why, I shall be hooted at; the boys will throw

stones at my porter. Besides, where shall I have money for all this expense?

Cla. My dear, who asks you for any? Don't be in a fright, chicken.

Gripe. Don't be in a fright, madam!—But where, I say—

Flip. Madam plays, sir; think on that. Women that play have inexhaustible mines; and wives who receive least money from their husbands, are many times those who spend the most.

Cla. So, my dear, let what Flippanta says content you. Go, my life, trouble yourself with nothing, but let me do just as I please, and all will be well. I'm going into my closet, to consider of some more things to enable me to give you the pleasure of my company at home. [Exit.

Flip. Mirror of goodness! Pattern to all wives!—Well sure, sir, you are the happiest of all husbands.

Gripe. Yes—and a miserable dog for all that too, perhaps.

Flip. Why, what can you ask more than this matchless complaisance?

Gripe. I don't know what I can ask, and yet I'm not satisfied with what I have neither; the devil mixes in it all, I think: complaisant or perverse, it feels just as it did.

Cla. [Within] Flippanta!

Flip. Madam calls.—I come, madam.—Come, be merry, be merry, sir; you have cause, take my word for't.—Poor devil! [Aside. Exit.

Gripe. I don't know that, I don't know that: but this I do know, that an honest man, who has married a jade, whether she's pleased to spend her time at home or abroad, had better have lived a bachelor.

Re-enter BRASS.

Brass. O, sir, I am mighty glad I have found you.

Gripe. Why, what's the matter, pr'ythee?

Brass. Can nobody hear us?

Gripe. No, no—speak quickly.

Brass. You han't seen Araminta, since the last letter I oarried her from you?

Gripe. Not I; I go prudently; I don't press things like your young firebrand lovers.

Brass. But seriously, sir, are you very much in love with her?

Gripe. As mortal man has been.

Brass. I'm sorry for't.

Gripe. Why so, dear Brass?

Brass. If you were never to see her more now?—Suppose such a thing; d'you think 'twould break your heart?

Gripe. Oh!

Brass. Nay, now I see you love her; 'would you did not!

Gripe. My dear friend——

Brass. I'm in your interest deep; you see it.

Gripe. I do.—But speak, what miserable story hast thou for me?

Brass. I had rather the devil had—phu—flown away with you quick, than to see you so much in love as I perceive you are, since——

Gripe. Since what?—ho.

Brass. Araminta, sir——

Gripe. Dead?

Brass. No.

Gripe. How then?

Brass. Worse.

Gripe. Out with't.

Brass. She is, poor lady, in the most unfortunate situation of affairs. But I have said too much.

Gripe. No, no, 'tis very sad, but let's hear it.

Brass. Sir, she charged me, on my life, never to mention it to you, of all men living.

Gripe. Why, who shouldst thou tell it to, but to the best of her friends?

Brass. Ay, why there's it now, it's going just as I fancied. Now will I be hanged if you are not enough in love to be engaging in this matter. But I must tell

you, sir, that as much concern as I have for that most excellent, beautiful, agreeable, distressed, unfortunate lady, I'm too much your friend and servant ever to let it be said, 'twas the means of your being ruined for a woman——by letting you know she esteemed you more than any other man upon earth.

Gripe. Ruin'd! what dost thou mean?

Brass. Mean! Why, I mean that women always ruin those that love 'em; that's the rule.

Gripe. The rule!

Brass. Yes, the rule; why, would you have 'em ruin those that don't? How shall they bring that about?

Gripe. But is there a necessity then they should ruin somebody?

Brass. Yes, marry, is there; how would you have 'em support their expense else? Why, sir, you can't conceive now——you can't conceive what Araminta's privy purse requires——only her privy purse, sir! Why what do you imagine now she gave me for the last letter I carried her from you? 'Tis true, 'twas from a man she liked, else perhaps I had had my bones broke. But what do you think she gave me?

Gripe. Why, mayhap——a shilling.

Brass. A guinea, sir, a guinea. You see by that how fond she was on't, by-the-by. But then, sir, her coach-hire, her chair-hire, her pin-money, her play-money, her china, and her charity——would consume peers: a great soul, a very great soul!——But what's the end of all this?

Gripe. Ha!

Brass. Why, I'll tell you what the end is——a nunnery.

Gripe. A nunnery!

Brass. A nunnery. In short, she is at last reduced to that extremity, and attacked with such a battalion of duns, that rather than tell her husband (who, you know, is such a dog, he'd let her go if she did), she has e'en determined to turn papist, and bid the world adieu for life.

Gripe. O terrible! a papist?

Brass. Yes, when a handsome woman has brought herself into difficulties, the devil can't help her out of——To a nunnery; that's another rule, sir.

Gripe. But, but, but, pr'ythee, Brass, but——

Brass. But all the buts in the world, sir, won't stop her; she's a woman of a noble resolution. So, sir, your humble servant. I pity her, I pity you. Turtle and mate—but the fates will have it so. All's pack'd up, and I'm now going to call her a coach; for she resolves to slip off without saying a word; and the next visit she receives from her friends will be through a melancholy grate, with a veil instead of a top-knot.

[*Going.*

Gripe. It must not be, by the powers it must not; she was made for the world, and the world was made for her.

Brass. And yet you see, sir, how small a share she has on't.

Gripe. Poor woman! Is there no way to save her?

Brass. Save her! No, how can she be saved? Why, she owes above five hundred pounds.

Gripe. Oh!

Brass. Five hundred pounds, sir. She's like to be saved indeed!——Not but that I know them in this town would give me one of the five, if I would persuade her to accept of the other four; but she had forbid me mentioning it to any soul living, and I have disobey'd her only to you; and so——I'll go and call a coach.

Gripe. Hold——dost think, my poor Brass, one might not order it so, as to compound those debts for——for twelpence in the pound?

Brass. Sir, d'ye hear? I have already tried 'em with ten shillings, and not a rogue will prick up his ears at it. Though, after all, for three hundred pounds, all in glittering gold, I could set their chops a watering.—But where's that to be had with honour? 'There's the thing, sir.—I'll go and call a coach.

Gripe. Hold, once more—I have a note in my closet

of two hundred, ay—and fifty; I'll go and give it her myself.

Brass. You will? Very genteel, truly. Go, slap-dash, and offer a woman of her scruples money, bolt in her face! Why, you might as well offer a scorpion; and she'd as soon touch it.

Gripe. Shall I carry it to her creditors then, and treat with them?

Brass. Ay, that's a rare thought.

Gripe. Is not it, Brass?

Brass. Only one little inconvenience by the way.

Gripe. As how?

Brass. That they are your wife's creditors, as well as hers; and perhaps it might not be altogether so well to see you clearing the debts of your neighbour's wife, and leaving those of your own unpaid.

Gripe. Why, that's true now.

Brass. I'm wise, you see, sir.

Gripe. Thou art; and I'm but a young lover: but what shall we do then?

Brass. Why, I'm thinking that if you give me the note, do you see; and that I promise to give you an account of it——

Gripe. Ay, but look you, Brass——

Brass. But look you!——Why, what d'ye think I'm a pick-pocket? D'ye think I intend to run away with your note—your paltry note?

Gripe. I don't say so—I say only that in case——

Brass. Case, sir! there's no case but the case I have put you; and since you heap case upon case where there is but three hundred rascally pounds in the case—I'll go and call a coach.

Gripe. Pr'ythee don't be so testy; come, no more words; follow me to my closet, and I'll give thee the money.

Brass. A terrible effort you make indeed! you are so much in love, your wits are all upon the wing, just a going; and for three hundred pounds you put a stop to their flight: sir, your wits are worth that, or your wits are worth nothing. Come away.

Gripe. Well, say no more; thou shalt be satisfied.

[*Exeunt.*]

Re-enter DICK.

Dick. Hist——Brass! Hist——

Re-enter BRASS.

Brass. Well, sir!

Dick. 'Tis not well, sir; 'tis very ill, sir; we shall be all blown up.

Brass. What, with pride and plenty?

Dick. No, sir, with an officious slut, that will spoil all. In short, Flippanta has been telling her mistress and Araminta of my passion for the young gentlewoman; and truly, to oblige me (supposed no ill match, by-the-by), they are resolved to propose it immediately to her father.

Brass. That's the devil! we shall come to papers and parchments, jointures and settlements, relations meet on both sides; that's the devil.

Dick. I intended this very day to propose to Flippanta the carrying her off: and I'm sure the young housewife would have tucked up her coats, and have marched.

Brass. Ay, with the body and the soul of her.

Dick. Why then, what damn'd luck is this?

Brass. 'Tis your damn'd luck, not mine: I have always seen it in your ugly pliz, in spite of your powder'd perriwig——Plague take ye——he'll be hang'd at last. Why don't you try to get her off yet?

Dick. I have no money, you dog; you know you have stripped me of every penny.

Brass. Come, damn it, I'll venture one cargo more upon you; but if ever I see one glance of your hempen fortune again, I'm off of your partnership for ever.——I shall never thrive with him.

Dick. An impudent rogue! But he's in possession of my estate; so I must bear with him. [*Aside.*]

Brass. Well, come, I'll raise a hundred pounds for your use upon my wife's jewels here; [*Pulls out the Necklace*] her necklace shall pawn for't.

Dick. Remember though, that if things fail, I'm to have the necklace again; you know you agreed to that.

Brass. Yes; and if I make it good, you'll be the better for't; if not, I shall: so you see where the cause will pinch.

Dick. Why, you barbarous dog, you won't offer to——

Brass. No words now; about your business—march. Go stay for me at the next tavern; I'll go to Flippanta, and try what I can do for you.

Dick. Well, I'll go; but don't think to——O, plague, sir——

[*Erit.*

Brass. Will you be gone? A pretty tittle you'd have to sue me upon truly, if I should have a mind to stand upon the defensive, as perhaps I may. I have done the rascal service enough to lull my conscience upon't, I'm sure: but 'tis time enough for that. Let me see—first, I'll go to Flippanta, and put a stop to this family-way of match-making, then sell our necklace for what ready money 'twill produce; and by this time to-morrow I hope we shall be in possession of—t'other jewel here; a precious jewel, as she's set in gold: I believe, for the stone itself, we may part with't again to a friend—for a tester.

[*Erit.*

ACT THE FIFTH.



SCENE I. *GRIPE's House.*

Enter BRASS and FLIPPANTA.

Brass. Well, you agree I'm in the right, don't you?

Flip. I don't know; if your master has the estate he talks of, why not do't all above-board?—Well, though I am not much of his mind, I'm much in his interest, and will therefore endeavour to serve him in his own way.

Brass. That's kindly said, my child; and I believe I shall reward thee one of these days with as pretty a fellow to thy husband for't, as—

Flip. Hold your prating, Jack-a-dandy, and leave me to my business.

Brass. I obey.—Adieu.

[*Kisses her.* Exit.

Flip. Rascal!

Enter CORINNA.

Cor. Ah, Flippanta, I'm ready to sink down; my legs tremble under me, my dear Flippy.

Flip. And what's the affair?

Cor. My father's there within, with my mother and Araminta; I never saw him in so good a humour in my life.

Flip. And is that it that frightens you so?

Cor. Ah, Flippanta, they are just going to speak to him about my marrying the colonel.

Flip. Are they so? So much the worse; they're too hasty.

Cor. O no, not a bit; I slipp'd out on purpose, you must know, to give 'em an opportunity. Would 'twere done already.

Flip. I tell you, no; get you in again immediately, and prevent it.

Cor. My dear, dear, I am not able; I never was in such a way before. Do but feel with what a thumpety thump my heart goes. [*Puts her Hand on her Heart.*]

Flip. Nay, it does make a filthy bustle, that's the truth on't, child. But I believe I shall make it leap another way, when I tell you I'm cruelly afraid your father won't consent, after all.

Cor. Why, he won't be the death o'me, will he?

Flip. I don't know; old folks are cruel: but we'll have a trick for him. Brass and I have been consulting upon the matter, and agreed upon a surer way of doing it, in spite of his teeth.

Cor. Ay, marry, sir, that were something.

Flip. But then he must not know a word of any thing towards it.

Cor. No, no.

Flip. So get you in immediately.

Cor. One, two, three, and away.

Flip. And prevent your mother's speaking on't.

Cor. But is t'other way sure, Flippanta?

Flip. Fear nothing, 'twill only depend upon you.

Cor. Nay then—O ho, ho, ho, how pure that is!

[*Exit.*]

Flip. Poor child! we may do what we will with her, as far as marrying her goes: when that's over, 'tis possible she mayn't prove altogether so tractable. But who's here? my sharper, I think:—yes.

Enter MONEYTRAP.

Mon. Well, my best friend, how go matters? Has the restitution been received, ha? Was she pleased with it?

Flip. Yes, truly; that is, she was pleased to see there was so honest a man in this immoral age.

Mon. Well, but a——does she know that 'twas I that——

Flip. Why, you must know I began to give her a little sort of a hint, and——and so——why, and so she began to put on a sort of a severe, haughty, reserved, angry, forgiving air. But soft, here she comes: you'll see how you stand with her presently. But don't be afraid.—Courage!

Mon. He, hem.

Enter CLARISSA.

'Tis no small piece of good fortune, madam, to find you at home: I have often endeavoured it in vain.

Cla. 'Twas then unknown to me; for if I could often receive the visits of so good a friend at home, I should be more reasonably blamed for being so much abroad.

Mon. Madam, you make me——

Cla. You are the man of the world whose company I think is most to be desired. I don't compliment you when I tell you so, I assure you.

Mon. Alas, madam, your poor humble servant——

Cla. My poor humble servant, however (with all the esteem I have for him), stands suspected with me for a vile trick I doubt he has played me; which, if I can prove upon him, I'm afraid I should punish him very severely.

Mon. I hope, madam, you'll believe I am not capable of——

Flip. No fine speeches, you'll spoil all.

[*Apart to Moneytrap.*

Mon. Thou art a most incomparable person.

[*Apart to Flippanta.*

Flip. Nay, it goes rarely; but get you in, and I'll say a little something to my lady for you while she's warm.

[*Apart.*

Mon. But, S't, Flippanta, how long dost think she may hold out? [*Apart.*

Flip. Phu, not a twelvemonth. [*Apart.*

Mon. Boo.

Flip. Away, I say. [*Pushes him out.*

Cla. Is he gone? What a wretch it is! he never was quite such a beast before.

Flip. Poor mortal! his money's finely laid out, truly.

Cla. I suppose there may have been much such another scene within, between Araminta and my dear: but I left him so insupportably brisk, 'tis impossible he can have parted with any money: I'm afraid Braus has not succeeded as thou hast done, Flippanta.

Flip. By my faith, but he has, and better too; he presents his humble duty to Araminta, and has sent her —this. [*Shows her the Note.*

Cla. A bill from my love for two hundred and fifty pounds. The monster! he would not part with ten, to save his lawful wife from everlasting torment.

Flip. Never complain of his avarice, madam, as long as you have his money. But which way will you go to receive it? for I must not appear with his note.

Cla. That's true; why, send for Mrs. Amlet. That's a mighty useful woman, that Mrs. Amlet.

Flip. Marry is she; we should have been basely puzzled how to dispose of the necklace without her; 'twould have been dangerous offering it for sale.

Cla. It would so; for I know your master has been laying out for't amongst the goldsmiths. But I stay here too long; I must in and coquet it a little more to my lover; Araminta will get ground on me else. [*Exit.*

Flip. And I'll go send for Mrs. Amlet. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *Another Apartment.*

ARAMINTA, CORINNA, GRIPE, and MONEYTRAP,
discovered at a Tea-table, very gay, and laughing.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Mon. Mighty well, O mighty well indeed!

Enter CLARISSA.

Cla. Save you, save you, good folks, you are all in rare humour, methinks.

Gripe. Why, what should we be otherwise for, madam?

Cla. Nay I don't know, not I, my dear; but I han't had the happiness of seeing you so since our honeymoon was over, I think.

Gripe. Why, to tell you the truth, my dear, 'tis the joy of seeing you at home. [*Kisses her*] You see what charms you have, when you are pleased to make use of 'em.

Ara. Very gallant, truly.

Cla. Nay, and what's more, you must know he's never to be otherwise henceforwards; we have come to an agreement about it.

Mon. Why, here's my love and I have been upon just such another treaty too.

Ara. Well, sure there's some very peaceful star rules at present. Pray heaven continue its reign.

Mon. Pray do you continue its reign, you ladies, for 'tis all in your power. [*Leering at Clarissa.*]

Gripe. My neighbour Moneytrap says true; at least I'll confess frankly, [*Ogling Araminta*] 'tis in one lady's power to make me the best-humoured man on earth.

Mon. And I'll answer for another, that has the same over me. [*Ogling Clarissa.*]

Cla. 'Tis mighty fine, gentlemen; mighty civil husbands indeed!

Gripe. Nay, what I say's true, and so true that, all quarrels being now at an end, I am willing, if you please, to dispense with all that fine company we talked of to-day, be content with the friendly conversation of our two good neighbours here, and spend all my toying hours alone with my sweet wife.

Mon. Why, truly, I think now, if these good women pleased, we might make up the prettiest little neighbourly company, between our two families, and set a defiance to all the impertinent people in the world.

Cla. The rascals.

[*Aside.*

Ara. Indeed I doubt you'd soon grow weary, if we grow fond.

Gripe. Never, never, for our wives have wit, neighbour, and that will never palls.

Cla. And our husbands have generosity, *Araminta*, and that seldom palls.

Gripe. So, that's a wipe for me now, because I did not give her a new year's gift last time; but be good, and I'll think of some tea-cups for you next year.

Mon. And perhaps I mayn't forget a fan, or as good a thing—hum, hussy.

Cla. Well, upon these encouragements, *Araminta*, we'll try how good we can be.

Gripe. Well, this goes most rarely: poor *Money-trap*, he little thinks what makes his wife so easy in his company.

[*Aside.*

Mon. I can but pity poor neighbour *Gripe*. Lard, lard, what a fool does his wife and I make of him.

[*Aside.*

Cla. Are not these two wretched dogs, *Araminta*?

[*Apart to Araminta.*

Ara. They are indeed.

[*Apart to Clarissa.*

Enter JESSAMIN.

Jes. Sir, here's Mr. Clip, the goldsmith, desires to speak with you.

[*Exit.*

Gripe. Cod's so, perhaps some news of your neck-lace, my dear.

Cla. That would be news indeed.

Gripe. Let him come in.

Enter CLIP.

Mr. Clip, your servant; I'm glad to see you: how do you do?

Clip. At your service, sir, very well. Your servant, madam *Gripe*.

Cla. Horrid fellow!

[*Aside.*

Gripe. Well, Mr. Clip, no news yet of my wife's necklace?

Clip. If you please to let me speak with you in the next room, I have something to say to you.

Gripe. Ay, with all my heart. Neighbour Moneytrap, be so good as to take the ladies into the next room. [*Exeunt Moneytrap and Ladies*] Well, any news?

Clip. Look you, sir, here's a necklace brought me to sell, at least very like that you described to me.

Gripe. Let's see't—Victoria! the very same. Ah, my dear Mr. Clip—[*Embraces him*—] But who brought it you? you should have seized him.

Clip. 'Twas a young fellow that I know: I can't tell whether he may be guilty, though it's like enough. But he has only left it me now, to show a brother of our trade, and will call upon me again presently.

Gripe. Wheedle him hither, dear Mr. Clip. Here's my neighbour Moneytrap in the house; he's a justice, and will commit him presently.

Clip. 'Tis enough.

Enter BRASS.

Gripe. O, my friend Brass!

Brass. Hold, sir, I think that's a gentleman I'm looking for. Mr. Clip! O, your servant; what, are you acquainted here? I have just been at your shop.

Clip. I only stepped here to show Mr. Gripe the necklace you left.

Brass. Why, sir, do you understand jewels? [*To Gripe*] I thought you only dealt in gold. But I smoke the matter; hark you—a word in your ear—you are going to play the gallant again, and make a purchase on't for Araminta; ha, ha!

Gripe. Where had you the necklace?

Brass. Look you, don't you trouble yourself about that; it's in commission with me, and I can help you to a pennyworth on't.

Gripe. A pennyworth on't, villain? [*Strikes at him.*]

Brass. Villain! a hey, a hey. Is't you or me, Mr. Clip, he's pleased to compliment?

Clip. What do you think on't, sir?

Brass. Think on't, now the devil fetch me if I know what to think on't.

Gripe. You'll sell a pennyworth, rogue! of a thing you have stolen from me.

Brass. Stolen! pray, sir—what wine have you drank to-day? It has a very merry effect upon you.

Gripe. You villain! either give me an account how you stole it, or——

Brass. O ho, sir, if you please, don't carry your jest too far. I don't understand hard words, I give you warning on't: if you han't a mind to buy the necklace, you may let it alone, I know how to dispose on't. What a plague——

Gripe. O, you shan't have that trouble, sir. Dear Mr. Clip, you may leave the necklace here. I'll call at your shop, and thank you for your care.

Clip. Sir, your humble servant. [Going.]

Brass. O ho, Mr. Clip, if you please, sir, this won't do. [Stops him] I don't understand raillery in such matters.

Clip. I leave it with Mr. Gripe; do you and he dispute it. [Exit.]

Brass. Ay, but 'tis from you, by your leave, sir, that I expect it. [Going after him.]

Gripe. You expect, you rogue, to make your escape, do you? But I have other accounts besides this, to make up with you. To be sure the dog has cheated me of two hundred and fifty pounds. Come, villain, give me an account of——

Brass. Account of!——Sir, give me an account of my necklace, or I'll make such a noise in your house, I'll raise the devil in it.

Gripe. Well said, courage.

Brass. Blood and thunder, give it me, or——

Gripe. Come, hush, be wise, and I'll make no noise of this affair.

Brass. You'll make no noise; but I'll make a noise, and a damned noise too. O, don't think to——

Gripe. I tell thee I will not hang thee.

Brass. But I tell you I will hang you, if you don't give me my necklace. I will, rot me.

Gripe. Speak softly, be wise; how came it thine? who gave it thee?

Brass. A gentleman, a friend of mine.

Gripe. What was his name?

Brass. His name?—I'm in such a passion, I have forgot it.

Gripe. Ah, brazen rogue——thou hast stole it from my wife: 'tis the same she lost six weeks ago.

Brass. This has not been in England a month.

Gripe. You are a son of a whore.

Brass. Give me my necklace.

Gripe. Give me my two hundred and fifty pound note.

Brass. Yet I offer peace: one word without passion. The case stands thus: either I'm out of my wits, or you are out of yours: now 'tis plain I am not out of my wits, ergo——

Gripe. My bill, hang-dog, or I'll strangle thee.

[*They struggle.*]

Brass. Murder, murder!

Re-enter CLARISSA, ARAMINTA, CORINNA, and MONEYTRAP, with FLIPPANTA.

Flip. What's the matter? What's the matter here?

Gripe. I'll matter him.

Cla. Who makes thee cry out thus, poor Brass?

Brass. Why, your husband, madam; he's in his attitudes here.

Gripe. Robber.

Brass. Here he has cheated me of a diamond necklace.

Cor. Who, papa? Ah, dear me!

Cla. Pr'ythee what's the meaning of this great emotion, my dear?

Gripe. The meaning is that—I'm quite out of breath——this son of a whore has got your necklace, that's all.

Cla. My necklace?

Gripe. That birdlime there——stole it.

Cla. Impossible!

Brass. Madam, you see master's a little——touched, that's all. Twenty ounces of blood let loose, would set all right again.

Gripe. Here, call a constable presently. Neighbour Moneytrap, you'll commit him.

Brass. D'ye hear? d'ye hear? See how wild he looks: how his eyes roll in his head: tie him down, or he'll do some mischief or other.

Gripe. Let me come at him.

Cla. Hold——pr'ythee, my dear, reduce things to a little temperance, and let us coolly into the secret of this disagreeable rupture.

Gripe. Well, then, without passion: why, you must know (but I'll have him hanged), you must know that he came to Mr. Clip, to Mr. Clip the dog did—with a necklace to sell; so Mr. Clip having notice before that (can you deny this, sirrah?) you had lost yours, brings it me. Look at it here; do you know it again? Ay, you traitor!

[*To Brass.*

Brass. He makes me mad. Here's an appearance of something now to the company, and yet nothing in't in the bottom.

[*Clarissa and Flippanta view the Necklace aside.*

Flip. 'Tis it, faith; here's some mystery in this, we must look about us.

[*Aside to Clarissa.*

Cla. The safest way is point blank to disown the necklace.

[*Aside to Flippanta.*

Flip. Right; stick to that.

[*Aside to Clarissa.*

Gripe. Well, madam, do you know your old acquaintance, ha?

Cla. Why truly, my dear, though (as you may all imagine) I should be very glad to recover so valuable a thing as my necklace, yet I must be just to all the world; this necklace is not mine.

Flip. No, that's not my lady's necklace.

Brass. Huzza——Mr. Justice, I demand my necklace, and satisfaction of him.

Gripe. I'll die before I part with it; I'll keep it, and have him hanged.

Cla. But be a little calm, my dear; do, my bird, and then thou'lt be able to judge rightly of things.

Gripe. O good lack! O good lack!

Cla. No, but don't give way to fury and interest both, either of them are passions strong enough to lead a wise man out of the way. The necklace not being really mine, give it the man again, and come and drink a dish of tea.

Brass. Ay, madam says right.

Gripe. Oons, if you with your addle head don't know your own jewels, I with my solid one do; and if I part with it, may famine be my portion.

Cla. But don't swear and curse thyself at this fearful rate, don't, my dove; be temperate in your words and just in all your actions, 'twill bring a blessing upon you and your family.

Gripe. Bring thunder and lightning upon me and my family, if I part with my necklace.

Cla. Why, you'll have the lightning burn your house about your ears, my dear, if you go on in these practices.

Mon. A most excellent woman this! [Aside.

Enter MRS. AMLET.

Gripe. I'll keep my necklace.

Brass. Will you so? Then here comes one has a title to it, if I han't.—Let Dick bring himself off with her as he can. Mrs. Amlet you are come in a very good time; you lost a necklace t'other day, and who do you think has got it?

Mrs. A. Marry, that I know not, I wish I did.

Brass. Why then here's Mr. Gripe has it, and swears 'tis his wife's.

Gripe. And so I do, sirrah—look here, mistress, do you pretend this is yours?

Mrs. A. Not for the round world, I would not say it; I only kept it to do madam a small courtesy, that's all.

Cla. Ah, Flippanta, all will out now.

[Aside to Flippanta.

Gripe. Courtesy! what courtesy?

Mrs. A. A little money only that madam had present need of; please to pay me that and I demand no more.

Brass. So, here's fresh game; I have started a new hare, I find.

Gripe. How, forsooth, is this true? [To *Clarissa*.]

Cla. You are in a humour at present, love, to believe any thing, so I won't take the pains to contradict it.

Brass. This damn'd necklace will spoil all our affairs; this is Dick's luck again.

Gripe. Are you not ashamed of these ways? Do you see how you are exposed before your best friends here? Don't you blush at it?

Cla. I do blush, my dear, but 'tis for you, that here it should appear to the world, you keep me so bare of money, I'm forc'd to pawn my jewels.

Gripe. Impudent housewife!

[Raising his Hand to strike her.]

Cla. Softly, chicken; you might have prevented all this, by giving me the two hundred and fifty pounds you sent to *Araminta* e'en now.

Brass. You see, sir, I delivered your note: how I have been abused to-day!

Gripe. I'm betray'd—Jades on both sides, I see that.

[Aside.]

Mon. But, madam, madam, is this true that I hear? Have you taken a present of two hundred and fifty pounds? Pray what were you to return for these pounds, madam, ha?

Arx. Nothing, my dear, I only took them to reimburse you of about the same sum you sent to *Clarissa*.

Mon. Hum, hum, hum.

Gripe. How, gentlewoman, did you receive money from him?

Cla. O, my dear, 'twas only in jest; I knew you'd give it again to his wife.

Mrs. A. But amongst all this bustle, I don't hear a word of my hundred pounds. Is it madam will pay me, or master?

Gripe. I pay! The devil shall pay.

Cla. Look you, my dear, malice apart, pay *Mrs.*

Amlet her money, and I'll forgive you the wrong you intended my bed with Araminta: am not I a good wife, now?

Gripe. I burst with rage, and will get rid of this noose, though I tuck myself up in another.

Mon. Nay, pray e'en tuck me up with you.

[*Exeunt Moneytrap and Gripe.*]

Cla. Ara. B'y, dearies.

Enter DICK.

Cor. Look, look, Flippanta, here's the colonel come at last.

Dick. Ladies, I ask your pardon, I have stayed so long, but—

Mrs. A. Ah, rogue's face, have I got thee, old good-for-naught? Sirrah, sirrah, do you think to amuse me with your marriages, and your great fortunes? Thou hast played me a rare prank, by my conscience. Why, you ungracious rascal, what do you think will be the end of all this? Now, heaven forgive me, but I have a great mind to hang thee for't.

Cor. She talks to him very familiarly, Flippanta.

Flip. So methinks, by my faith.

Brass. Now the rogue's star is making an end of him.

Dick. What shall I do with her? [Aside.]

Mrs. A. Do but look at him, my dames, he has the countenance of a cherubim, but he's a rogue in his heart.

Cla. What is the meaning of all this, Mrs. Amlet?

Mrs. A. The meaning, good lack? Why this all-to-be-powdered rascal here, is my son, an't please you. Ha, Graceless! now I'll make you own your mother, vermin.

Cla. What, the colonel your son?

Mrs. A. 'Tis Dick, madam, that rogue Dick, I have so often told you of with tears trickling down my old cheeks.

Ara. The woman's mad, it can never be.

Mrs. A. Speak, rogue, am I not thy mother, ha? Did I not bring thee forth, say then?

Dick. What will you have me say? You had a mind to ruin me, and you have done't; would you do any more?

Cla. Then, sir, you are son to good Mrs. Amlet?

Ara. And have had the assurance to put upon us all this while!

Flip. And the confidence to think of marrying Corinna.

Brass. And the impudence to hire me for your servant, who am as well born as yourself.

Cla. Indeed I think he should be corrected.

Ara. Indeed I think he deserves to be cudgelled.

Flip. Indeed I think he might be pump'd.

Brass. Indeed I think he will be hang'd.

Mrs. A. Good lack-a-day, good lack-a-day! there's no need to be so smart upon him neither: if he is not a gentleman, he's a gentleman's fellow. Come hither, Dick, they shan't run thee down, neither; cock up thy hat, Dick, and tell them, though Mrs. Amlet is thy mother, she can make thee amends with ten thousand good pounds, to buy thee some lands, and build thee a house in the midst on't.

Omnes. How?

Cla. Ten thousand pounds, Mrs. Amlet?

Mrs. A. Yes, forsooth, though I should lose the hundred you pawn'd your necklace for. Tell 'em of that, Dick.

Cor. Look you, Flippanta, I can hold no longer, and I hate to see the young man abused. And so, sir, if you please, I'm your friend and servant, and what's mine is yours; and when our estates are put together, I don't doubt but we shall do as well as the best of 'em.

Dick. Say'st thou so, my little queen? Why then, if dear mother will give us her blessing, the parson shall give us a tack. We'll get her a score of grand-children, and a merry house we'll make her.

[*They kneel to Mrs. Amlet.*]

Mrs. A. Ah!—ha, ha, ha, ha, the pretty pair, the pretty pair! rise, my chickens, rise, rise and face the proudest of them. And if madam does not deign to give her consent, a fig for her, Dick—Why, how now?

Cla. Pray, Mrs. Amlet, don't be in a passion, the girl is my husband's girl, and if you can have his consent, upon my word you shall have mine, for any thing belongs to him.

Flip. Then all's peace again; but we have been more lucky than wise.

Ara. And I suppose for us, Clarissa, we are to go on with our dears as we used to do?

Cla. Just in the same tract; for this late treaty of agreement with 'em was so unnatural, you see it could not hold. But 'tis just as well with us as if it had. Well, 'tis a strange fate, good folks; but while you live every thing gets well out of a broil but a husband.

Flip. From this example let each wedded pair,
That would the solid joys of wedlock share,
Avoid the trifling follies of the town,
Where no substantial joys were ever known;
And hold, as the most certain joys of life,
An honest husband, and a virtuous wife. [Exit.

EPILOGUE.

I'VE heard wise men in politics lay down
What feats by little England might be done,
Were all agreed, and all would act as one.
Ye wives a useful hint from this might take,
The heavy, old, despotic kingdom shake,
And make your matrimonial monsieur's quake.
Our heads are feeble, and we're cramp'd by laws;
Our hands are weak, and not too strong our cause:
Yet would these heads and hands, such as they are,
In firm confed'racy resolve on war,
You'd find your tyrants——what I've found my dear.
What only two united can produce,
You've seen to-night a sample for your use:
Single, we found we nothing could obtain;
We join our force——and we subdu'd our men.
Believe me (my dear sex), they are not brave;
Try each your man, you'll quickly find your slave.
I know they'll make campaigns, risk blood and life;
But this is a more terrifying strife:
They'll stand a shot who'll tremble at a wife.
Beat then your drums, and your shrill trumpets sound,
Let all your visits of your feats resound,
And deeds of war in cups of tea go round:
The stars are with you, fate is in your hand,
In twelve months time you've vanquish'd half the land;
Be wise, and keep them under good command.
This year will to your glory long be known,
And deathless ballads hand your triumphs down;
Your late achievements ever will remain;
For though you cannot boast of many slain,
Your pris'ners show you've made a brave campaign.

THE
CONSCIOUS LOVERS.

A Comedy.

BY SIR RICHARD STEELE.

CORRECTLY GIVEN, FROM COPIES USED IN THE THEATRES,

BY

THOMAS DIBDIN,

OF THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.

Author of several Dramatic Pieces, &c.



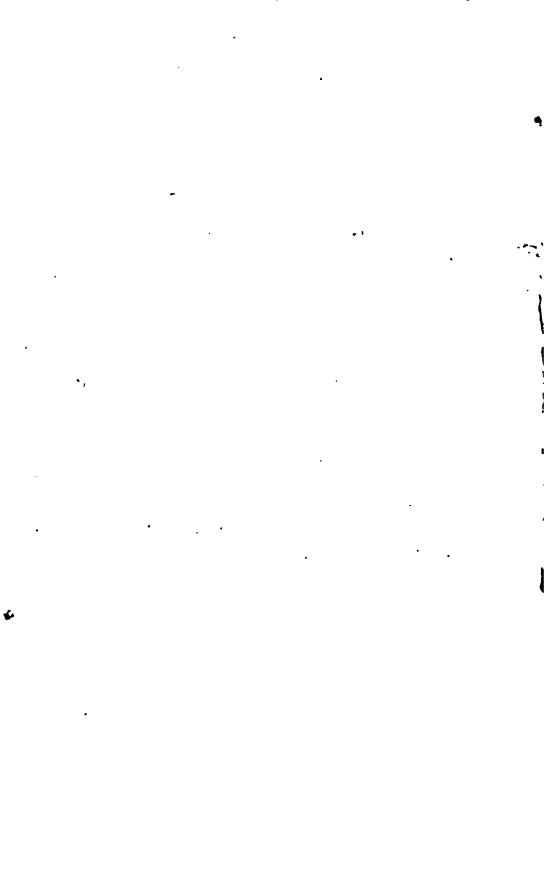
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1816.



THE CONSCIOUS LOVERS

Is in some degree founded on the *Andria* of Terence; and was first acted at Drury Lane in 1721. This comedy has always experienced great applause when acted; but the general effect of it has been rather too sentimental to allow of its being very often represented. It is no mean compliment to a play, and certainly a very unusual one, to say, that it is much more effective in the closet than on the stage. The arguments against duelling, in the fourth act, do credit to the author's head and heart, as does indeed the whole of this elegant production.



PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. WELSTED.

To win your hearts, and to secure your praise,
The comic writers strive by various ways;
By subtle stratagems they act their game,
And leave untry'd no avenue to fame.
One writes the spouse a beating from his wife,
And says each stroke was copy'd from the life;
Some fix all wit and humour in grimace,
And make a livelihood of Pinkey's face;
Here one gay show and costly habit tries,
Confiding to the judgment of your eyes;
Another smuts his scene (a cunning shaver),
Sure of the rakes' and of the wenches' favour.
Oft have these arts prevail'd, and one may guess,
If practis'd o'er again, would find success;
But the bold sage, the poet of to-night,
By new and desperate rules resolv'd to write;
Fain would he give more just applauses rise,
And please by wit that scorns the aids of vice;
The praise he seeks from worthier motives springs,
Such praise as praise to those that give it brings.
Your aid most humbly sought then, Britons, lend,
And lib'ral mirth, like lib'ral men, defend;
No more let ribaldry, with licence writ,
Usurp the name of eloquence or wit;
No more let lawless farce uncensur'd go,
The lewd dull gleanings of a Smithfield show;
'Tis yours with breeding to refine the age;
To chasten wit, and moralize the stage.
Ye modest, wise, and good! ye fair! ye brave!
To-night the champion of your virtues save;
Redeem from long contempt the comic name,
And judge politely for your country's fame.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted at Drury Lane, 1721.

<i>Sir John Bevil</i>	Mr. Mills.
<i>Sealand</i>	Mr. Williams.
<i>Bevil</i>	Mr. Booth.
<i>Myrtle</i>	Mr. Wilkes.
<i>Cimberton</i>	Mr. Griffin.
<i>Humphrey</i>	Mr. Shepard.
<i>Tom</i>	Mr. Cibber.
<i>Daniel</i>	Mr. Theo. Cibber.

<i>Mrs. Sealand</i>	Mrs. Moore.
<i>Isabella</i>	Mrs. Thurmend.
<i>Indiana</i>	Mrs. Oldfield.
<i>Lucinda</i>	Mrs. Booth.
<i>Phillis</i>	Mrs. Younger.

1792.

Drury Lane.

Covent Garden.

<i>Sir John Bevil</i> . . .	Mr. Bransby.	Mr. Fearon.
<i>Sealand</i>	Mr. Aikin.	Mr. Clarke.
<i>Bevil</i>	Mr. Reddish.	Mr. Lewis.
<i>Myrtle</i>	Mr. Jefferson.	Mr. Wroughton.
<i>Cimberton</i>	Mr. Parsons.	Mr. Quick.
<i>Humphrey</i>	Mr. Usher.	Mr. Thompson.
<i>Tom</i>	Mr. King.	Mr. Woodward.
<i>Daniel</i>	Mr. Waldron.	Mr. Wewitzer.

<i>Mrs. Sealand</i> . . .	Mrs. Cross.	Mrs. Pitt.
<i>Isabella</i>	Mrs. Johnston.	Mrs. Booth.
<i>Indiana</i>	Miss Younge.	Mrs. Jackson.
<i>Lucinda</i>	Miss Hopkins.	Miss Ambrose.
<i>Phillis</i>	Mrs. Abington.	Mrs. Matlocks.

SCENE—LONDON.

ACT THE FIRST.



SCENE I. SIR JOHN BEVIL'S House.

Enter SIR JOHN BEVIL and HUMPHREY.

Sir J. HAVE you ordered that I should not be interrupted while I am dressing?

Hum. Yes, sir; I believ'd you had something of moment to say to me.

Sir J. I'll tell thee then. In the first place, this wedding of my son's in all probability—shut the door—will never be at all.

Hum. How, sir! not be at all? For what reason is it carried on in appearance?

Sir J. Honest Humphrey, have patience, and I'll tell thee all in order. I have myself, in some part of my life lived indeed with freedom, but I hope without reproach: now I thought liberty would be as little injurious to my son; therefore, as soon as he grew towards man, I indulg'd him in living after his own manner. I know not how otherwise to judge of his inclination; for what can be concluded from a behaviour under re-

straint and fear? But what charms me above all expression is, that my son has never, in the least action, the most distant hint or word, valued himself upon that great estate of his mother's, which, according to our marriage settlement, he has had ever since he came to age.

Hum. No, sir; on the contrary he seems afraid of appearing to enjoy it before you or any belonging to you. He is as dependent and resigned to your will as if he had not a farthing but what must come from your immediate bounty. You have ever acted like a good and generous father, and he like an obedient and grateful son.

Sir J. To be short, Humphrey, his reputation was so fair in the world, that old Sealand, the great India merchant, has offered his only daughter, and sole heiress to that vast estate of his, as a wife for him. You may be sure I made no difficulties; the match was agreed on, and this very day named for the wedding.

Hum. What hinders the proceeding?

Sir J. Don't interrupt me. You know I was, last Thursday, at the masquerade; my son, you may remember, soon found us out. He knew his grandfather's habit, which I then wore; and though it was in the mode of the last age, yet the maskers, you know, followed us as if we had been the most monstrous figures in that whole assembly.

Hum. I remember indeed a young man of quality, in the habit of a clown, that was particularly troublesome.

Sir J. Right; he was too much what he seemed to be. You remember how impertinently he followed and teased us, and would know who we were.

Hum. I know he has a mind to come into that particular. *[Aside.*

Sir J. Ay, he followed us till the gentleman, who led the lady in the Indian mantle, presented that gay creature to the rustic, and bid him (like Cymon in the fable) grow polite, by falling in love, and let that worthy old gentleman alone, meaning me. The clown was not reform'd, but rudely persisted, and offered to force off

my mask: with that the gentleman, throwing off his own, appeared to be my son; and in his concern for me, tore off that of the nobleman. At this they seized each other, the company called the guards, and in the surprise the lady swooned away; upon which my son quitted his adversary, and had now no care but of the lady; when, raising her in his arms, "Art thou gone," cried he, "for ever?—Forbid it, heaven!"—She revives at his known voice, and with the most familiar, though modest, gesture hangs in safety over his shoulders, weeping; but wept as in the arms of one before whom she could give herself a loose, were she not under observation. While she hides her face in his neck, he carefully conveys her from the company.

Hum. I have observed this accident has dwelt upon you very strongly.

Sir J. Her uncommon air, her noble modesty, the dignity of her person, and the occasion itself, drew the whole assembly together; and I soon heard it buzzed about she was the adopted daughter of a famous sea officer, who had serv'd in France. Now this unexpected and public discovery of my son's so deep concern for her——

Hum. Was what, I suppose, alarm'd Mr. Sealand, in behalf of his daughter, to break off the match.

Sir J. You are right: he came to me yesterday, and said he thought himself disengaged from the bargain, being credibly informed my son was already married, or worse, to the lady at the masquerade. I palliated matters, and insisted on our agreement; but we parted with little less than a direct breach between us.

Hum. Well, sir, and what notice have you taken of all this to my young master?

Sir J. That's what I wanted to debate with you. I have said nothing to him yet. But lookye, Humphrey, if there is so much in this amour of his, that he denies upon my summons to marry, I have cause enough to be offended; and then, by my insisting upon his marrying to-day, I shall know how far he is engaged to this lady in masquerade, and from thence only shall be able

to take my measures. In the mean time, I would have you find out how far that rogue, his man, is let into his secret: he, I knew, will play tricks as much to cross me as to serve his master.

Hum. Why do you think so of him, sir? I believe he is no worse than I was for you at your son's age.

Sir J. I see it in the rascal's looks. But I have dwelt on these things too long: I'll go to my son immediately; and while I'm gone, your part is to convince his rogue, Tom, that I am in earnest. I'll leave him to you.

[*Erit.*

Hum. Well, though this father and son live as well together as possible, yet their fear of giving each other pain is attended with constant, mutual uneasiness. I am sure I have enough to do to be honest, and yet keep well with them both; but they know I love 'em, and that makes the task less painful however.—Oh, here's the prince of poor coxcombs, the representative of all the better fed than taught.—Ho, ho, Tom! whither so gay and so airy this morning?

Enter Tom, singing.

Tom. Sir, we servants of single gentlemen are another kind of people than you domestic, ordinary drudges, that do business; we are raised above you: the pleasures of board wages, tavern dinners, and many a clear gain—vails, alas! you never heard or dreamt of.

Hum. Thou hast follies and vices enough for a man of ten thousand a year, though it is but as t'other day that I sent for you to town to put you into Mr. Sealand's family, that you might learn a little before I put you to my young master, who is too gentle for training such a rude thing as you were into proper obedience. You then pulled off your hat to every one you met in the street, like a bashful, great, awkward oub as you were. But your great oaken cudgel, when you were a booby, became you much better than that dangling stick at your button, now you are a top, that's fit for nothing except it hangs there to be ready for your master's hand when you are impertinent.

Tom. Uncle Humphrey, you know my master scorns to strike his servants. You talk as if the world was now just as it was when my old master and you were in your youth; when you went to dinner because it was so much o'clock; when the great blow was given in the hall at the pantry door, and all the family came out of their holes, in such strange dresses and formal faces as you see in the pictures in our long gallery in the country.

Hum. Why, you wild rogue!

Tom. You could not fall to your dinner till a formal fellow, in a black gown, said something over the meat; as if the cook had not made it ready enough.

Hum. Sirrah, who do you prate after—despising men of sacred characters? I hope you never heard my young master talk so like a profligate?

Tom. Sir, I say you put upon me, when I first came to town, about being orderly, and the doctrine of wearing shams to make linen last clean a fortnight, keeping my clothes fresh, and wearing a frock within doors.

Hum. Sirrah, I gave you those lessons because I supposed at that time your master and you might have dined at home every day, and cost you nothing; then you might have made a good family servant: but the gang you have frequented since at chocolate-houses and taverns, in a continual round of noise and extravagance—

Tom. I don't know what you heavy inmates call noise and extravagance; but we gentlemen who are well fed and out a figure, sir, think it a fine life, and that we must be very pretty fellows who are kept only to be looked at.

Hum. Very well, sir, I hope the fashion of being lewd and extravagant, despising of decency and order, is almost at an end, since it is arrived at persons of your quality.

Tom. Master Humphrey, ha, ha! you were an unhappy lad to be sent up to town in such queer days as you were. Why now, sir, the lackeys are the men of pleasure of the age, the top gamesters; and many a

laced coat about town have had their education in our party-coloured regiment. We are false lovers, have a taste of music, poetry, billet-doux, dress, politics, ruin damsels; and when we are weary of this lewd town, and have a mind to take up, whip into our masters' wigs, and marry fortunes.

Hum. Hey-day!

Tom. Nay, sir, our order is carried up to the highest dignities and distinctions: step but into the Painted Chamber, and by our titles you'd take us all for men of quality; then again, come down to the Court of Requests, and you shall see us all laying our broken heads together for the good of the nation; and though we never carry a question *nemine contradicente*, yet this I can say with a safe conscience (and I wish every gentleman of our cloth could lay his hand upon his heart and say the same), that I never took so much as a single mug of beer for my vote in all my life.

Hum. Sirrah, there is no enduring your extravagance; I'll hear you prate no longer: I wanted to see you to inquire how things go with your master, as far as you understand them. I suppose he knows he is to be married to-day?

Tom. Ay, sir, he knows it, and is dressed as gay as the sun; but between you and I, my dear! he has a very heavy heart under all that gaiety. As soon as he was dressed I retired, but overheard him sigh in the most heavy manner. He walked thoughtfully to and fro in the room, then went into his closet: when he came out he gave me this for his mistress, whose maid you know——

Hum. Is passionately fond of your fine person.

Tom. The poor fool is so tender, and loves to hear me talk of the world, and the plays, operas, and *ridottoes*, for the winter; the Parks and *Bellsizes* for our summer diversions; and, "Lard!" says she, "you are so wild, but you have a world of humour."

Hum. Coxcomb! Well, but why don't you run with your master's letter to Mrs. Lucinda, as he order'd you?

Tom. Because Mrs. Lucinda is not so easily come at as you think for.

Hum. Not easily come at? Why, sir, are not her father and my old master agreed that she and Mr. Bevil are to be one flesh before to-morrow morning?

Tom. It's no matter for that: her mother, it seems, Mrs. Sealand, has not agreed to it; and you must know, Mr. Humphrey, that in that family the grey mare is the better horse.

Hum. What dost thou mean?

Tom. In one word, Mrs. Sealand pretends to have a will of her own, and has provided a relation of hers, a stiff-starched philosopher, and a wise fool, for her daughter; for which reason, for these ten days past, she has suffered no message or letter from my master to come near her.

Hum. And where had you this intelligence?

Tom. From a foolish fond soul, that can keep nothing from me; one that will deliver this letter too, if she is rightly managed.

Hum. What, her pretty handmaid, Mrs. Phillis?

Tom. Even she, sir. This is the very hour, you know, she usually comes hither, under a pretence of a visit to our housekeeper forsooth, but in reality to have a glance at——

Hum. Your sweet face, I warrant you.

Tom. Nothing else in nature. You must know I love to fret and play with the little wanton.

Hum. Play with the little wanton! What will this world come to?

Tom. I met her this morning in a new manteau and petticoat, not a bit the worse for her lady's wearing, and she has always new thoughts and new airs with new clothes; then she never fails to steal some glance or gesture from every visitant at their house, and is indeed the whole town of coquettes at second-hand. But here she comes; in one motion she speaks and describes herself better than all the words in the world can.

Hum. Then I hope, dear sir! when your own affair

is over, you will be so good as to mind your master's with her.

Tom. Dear Humphrey! you know my master is my friend; and those are people I never forget.

Hum. Sauciness itself! but I'll leave you to do your best for him. [Exit.

Enter PHILLIS.

Phil. Oh, Mr. Thomas, is Mrs. Sugarkey at home? Lard! one is almost ashamed to pass along the streets. The town is quite empty, and nobody of fashion left in it; and the ordinary people do so stare to see any thing dress'd like a woman of condition pass by. Alas! alas! it is a sad thing to walk: Oh, fortune, fortune!

Tom. What! a sad thing to walk? Why, madam Phillis, do you wish yourself lame?

Phil. No, Mr. Thomas; but I wish I were generally carried in a coach or a chair, and of a fortune neither to stand nor go, but to totter or slide, to be short-sighted or stare, to flieer in the face, to look distant, to observe, to overlook, yet all become me; and if I was rich I could twire and loll as well as the best of them. Oh, Tom, Tom! is it not a pity that you should be so great a coxcomb, and I so great a coquette, and yet be such poor devils as we are?

Tom. Mrs. Phillis, I am your humble servant for that.

Phil. Yes, Mr. Thomas, I know how much you are my humble servant, and know what you said to Mrs. Judy, upon seeing her in one of her lady's cast mantous—that any one would have thought her the lady, and that she had ordered the other to wear it till it sat easy (for now only it was becoming); to my lady it was only a covering, to Mrs. Judy it was a habit. This you said after somebody or other. Oh, Tom, Tom! thou art as false and as base as the best gentleman of them all: but you, wretch! talk to me no more on the old odious subject: don't, I say.

Tom. I know not how to resist your commands, madam.

[In a submissive Tone, retiring.

Phil. Commands about parting are grown mighty easy to you of late.

Tom. Oh, I have her! I have nettled and put her into the right temper to be wrought upon and set a prating. [*Aside*] Why, truly, to be plain with you, Mrs. Phillis, I can take little comfort of late in frequenting your house.

Phil. Pray, Mr. Thomas, what is it all of a sudden offends your nicety at our house?

Tom. I don't care to speak particulars, but I dislike the whole.

Phil. I thank you, sir; I am a part of that whole.

Tom. Mistake me not, good Phillis.

Phil. Good Phillis! ~~safer~~ *safer* enough. But, however—

Tom. I say it is that thou art a part which gives me pain for the disposition of the whole. You must know, madam, to be serious, I am a man at the bottom of prodigious nice honour. You are too much exposed to company at your house. To be plain, I don't like so many, that would be your mistress's lovers, whispering to you.

Phil. Don't think to put that upon me. You say this because I wrung you to the heart when I touched your guilty conscience about Judy.

Tom. Ah, Phillis, Phillis! if you but knew my heart!

Phil. I know too much on't.

Tom. Don't disparage your charms, good Phillis, with jealousy of so worthless an object; besides she is a poor hussy; and if you doubt the sincerity of my love, you will allow me true to my interest. You are a fortune, Phillis——

Phil. What would the fop be at now? [*Aside*] In good time indeed you shall be setting up for a fortune.

Tom. Dear Mrs. Phillis! you have such a spirit, that we shall never be dull in marriage when we come together. But I tell you you are a fortune, and you have an estate in my hands.

[*He pulls out a Purse, she eyes it.*]

Phil. What pretence have I to what is in your hands, Mr. Thomas?

Tom. As thus: there are hours you know when a lady is neither pleased nor displeased, neither sick nor well, when she lolls or loiters, when she is without desires, from having more of every thing than she knows what to do with.

Phil. Well, what then?

Tom. When she has not life enough to keep her bright eyes quite open to look at her own dear image in the glass.

Phil. Explain thyself, and don't be so fond of thy own prating.

Tom. There are also prosperous and good-natured moments; as when a knot or a patch is happily fixed, when the complexion particularly flourishes.

Phil. Well, what then? I have not patience!

Tom. Why then, or on the like occasions, we servants who have skill to know how to time business, see when such a pretty folded thing as this [*Shows a Letter*] may be presented, laid, or dropped, as best suits the present humour. And, madam, because it is a long wearisome journey to run through all the several stages of a lady's temper, my master, who is the most reasonable man in the world, presents you this to bear your charges on the road. [*Gives her the Purse.*]

Phil. Now you think me a corrupt hussy.

Tom. O fie! I only think you'll take the letter.

Phil. Nay, I know you do; but I know my own innocence: I take it for my mistress's sake.

Tom. I know it, my pretty one! I know it.

Phil. Yes, I say I do it because I would not have my mistress deluded by one who gives no proof of his passion: but I'll talk more of this as you see me on my way home. No, Tom; I assure thee I take this trash of thy master's, not for the value of the thing, but as it convinces me he has a true respect for my mistress. I remember a verse to the purpose—

They may be false who languish and complain,

But they who part with money never feign. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. BEVIL's Lodgings.

BEVIL discovered, reading.

Bevil. These moral writers practise virtue after death. This charming vision of Mirza!—such an author consulted in a morning sets the spirits for the vicissitudes of the day better than the glass does a man's person. But what a day have I to go through! to put on an easy look with an aching heart! If this lady my father urges me to marry should not refuse me, my dilemma is insupportable. But why should I fear it? is not she in equal distress with me? has not the letter I have sent her this morning, confessed my inclination to another? nay, have I not moral assurances of her engagements too to my friend Myrtle? It's impossible but she must give in to it; for sure to be denied is a favour any man may pretend to. It must be so. Well then, with the assurance of being rejected, I think I may confidently say to my father I am ready to marry her; then let me resolve upon (what I am not very good at) an honest dissimulation.

Enter Tom.

Tom. Sir John Bevil, sir, is in the next room.

Bevil. Dunce! why did you not bring him in?

Tom. I told him, sir, you were in your closet.

Bevil. I thought you had known, sir, it was my duty to see my father any where. [*Going himself to the Door.*

Tom. The devil's in my master! he has always more wit than I have. [*Aside.*

Enter SIR JOHN BEVIL, introduced by BEVIL.

Bevil. Sir, you are the most gallant, the most complaisant of all parents. Sure 'tis not a compliment to say these lodgings are yours. Why would you not walk in, sir?

Sir J. I was loath to interrupt you unseasonably on your wedding-day.

Bevil. One to whom I am beholden for my birthday might have used less ceremony.

Sir J. Well, son, I have intelligence you have writ

to your mistress this morning. It would please my curiosity to know the contents of a wedding-day letter, for courtship must then be over.

Bevil. I assure you, sir, there was no insolence in it, upon the prospect of such a vast fortune's being added to our family, but much acknowledgment of the lady's great desert.

Sir J. But, dear Jack, are you in earnest in all this? and will you really marry her?

Bevil. Did I ever disobey any command of yours, sir? nay, any inclination that I saw you bent upon? If the lady is dressed and ready, you see I am. I suppose the lawyers are ready too.

Enter HUMPHREY.

Hum. Sir, Mr. Sealand is at the coffee-house, and has sent to speak with you.

Sir J. Oh! that's well! then I warrant the lawyers are ready. Son, you'll be in the way, you say.

Bevil. If you please, sir, I'll take a chair and go to Mr. Sealand's; where the young lady and I will wait your leisure.

Sir J. By no means; the old fellow will be so vain if he sees——

Bevil. Ay; but the young lady, sir, will think me so indifferent——

Hum. Ay, there you are right. Press your readiness to go to the bride—he won't let you.

[Apart to Bevil.

Bevil. Are you sure of that? *[Apart to Humphrey.*

Hum. How he likes being prevented! *[Aside.*

Sir J. No, no; you are an hour or two too early; *[Looking on his Watch]* besides, this Sealand is a moody old fellow. There's no dealing with some people, but by managing with indifference. We must leave to him the conduct of this day; it is the last of his commanding his daughter.

Bevil. Sir, he can't take it ill that I am impatient to be hers.

Sir J. Well, son, I'll go myself and take orders in

your affair. You'll be in the way I suppose, if I send to you: I leave your old friend with you. Humphrey, don't let him stir, d'ye hear. Your servant, your servant. [Exit.]

Hum. I have a sad time on't, sir, between you and my master; I see you are unwilling, and I know his violent inclinations for the match; I must betray neither, and yet deceive you both, for your common good. Heaven grant a good end of this matter: but there is a lady, sir, that gives your father much trouble and sorrow. You'll pardon me.

Bevil. Humphrey, I know thou art a friend to both, and in that confidence I dare tell thee. That lady—is a woman of honour and virtue. You may assure yourself I never will marry without my father's consent; but give me leave to say too, this declaration does not come up to a promise that I will take whomsoever he pleases.

Hum. My dear master! were I but worthy to know this secret that so near concerns you, my life, my all, should be engaged to serve you. This, sir, I dare promise, that I am sure I will and can be secret: your trust at worst but leaves you where you were; and if I cannot serve you, I will at once be plain, and tell you so.

Bevil. That's all I ask. Thou hast made it now my interest to trust thee. Be patient then, and hear the story of my heart.

Hum. I am all attention, sir.

Bevil. You may remember, Humphrey, that in my last travels my father grew uneasy at my making so long a stay at Toulon.

Hum. I remember it; he was apprehensive some woman had laid hold of you.

Bevil. His fears were just; for there I first saw this lady: she is of English birth: her father's name was Danvers, a younger brother of an ancient family, and originally an eminent merchant of Bristol, who upon repeated misfortunes was reduced to go privately to

the Indies. In this retreat, Providence again grew favourable to his industry, and in six years time restored him to his former fortunes. On this he sent directions over that his wife and little family should follow him to the Indies. His wife, impatient to obey such welcome orders, would not wait the leisure of a convoy, but took the first occasion of a single ship; and with her husband's sister only and this daughter, then scarce seven years old, undertook the fatal voyage; for here, poor creature, she lost her liberty and life: she and her family, with all they had, were unfortunately taken by a privateer from Toulon. Being thus made a prisoner, though as such not ill-treated, yet the fright, the shock, and the cruel disappointment, seized with such violence upon her unhealthy frame, that she sickened, pined, and died at sea.

Hum. Poor soul! Oh, the helpless infant!

Bevil. Her sister yet survived, and had the care of her: the captain too proved to have humanity, and became a father to her; for having married himself an English woman, and being childless, he brought home into Toulon this her little countrywoman, this orphan I may call her, presenting her with all her dead mother's moveables of value to his wife, to be educated as his own adopted daughter.

Hum. Fortune here seemed again to smile on her.

Bevil. Only to make her frowns more terrible; for in his height of fortune this captain too, her benefactor, unfortunately was killed at sea; and dying intestate, his estate fell wholly to an advocate, his brother, who coming soon to take possession, there found among his other riches this blooming virgin at his mercy.

Hum. He durst not sure abuse his power?

Bevil. No wonder if his pampered blood was fired at the sight of her. In short he loved; but when all arts and gentle means had failed to move, he offered too his menaces in vain, denouncing vengeance on her cruelty, demanding her to account for all her maintenance from her childhood, seized on her little fortune

as his own inheritance, and was dragging her by violence to prison, when Providence at the instant interposed, and sent me, by miracle, to relieve her.

Hum. 'Twas Providence indeed! But pray, sir, after all this trouble, how came this lady at last to England?

Bevil. The disappointed advocate, finding she had so unexpected a support, on cooler thoughts descended to a composition, which I without her knowledge secretly discharged.

Hum. That generous concealment made the obligation double.

Bevil. Having thus obtained her liberty, I prevailed, not without some difficulty, to see her safe to England; where we no sooner arrived but my father, jealous of my being imprudently engaged, immediately proposed this other fatal match that hangs upon my quiet.

Hum. I find, sir, you are irrecoverably fixed upon this lady.

Bevil. As my vital life dwells in my heart; and yet you see what I do to please my father; walk in this pageantry of dress, this splendid covering of sorrow. But, Humphrey, you have your lesson.

Hum. Now, sir, I have but one material question.

Bevil. Ask it freely.

Hum. Is it then your own passion for this secret lady, or hers for you, that gives you this aversion to the match your father has proposed you?

Bevil. I shall appear, Humphrey, more romantic in my answer than in all the rest of my story; for though I dote on her to death, and have no little reason to believe she has the same thoughts for me, yet in all my acquaintance and utmost privacies with her I never once directly told her that I loved.

Hum. How was it possible to avoid it?

Bevil. My tender obligations to my father have laid so inviolable a restraint upon my conduct, that till I have his consent to speak, I am determined on that subject to be dumb for ever.—An honourable retreat shall always be at least within my power, however for

oblige the best of fathers if I don't seem ready to marry Lucinda; and you know I have ever told you, you might make use of my secret resolution never to marry her for your own service as you please; but I am now driven to the extremity of immediately refusing or complying, unless you help me to escape the match.

Myr. Escape, sir! neither her merit nor her fortune are below your acceptance.—Escaping, do you call it?

Bevil. Dear sir! do you wish I should desire the match?

Myr. No—but such is my humorous and sickly state of mind, since it has been able to relish nothing but Lucinda, that, though I must owe my happiness to your aversion to this marriage, I can't bear to hear her spoken of with levity or unconcern.

Bevil. Pardon me, sir, I shall transgress that way no more. She has understanding, beauty, shape, complexion, wit—

Myr. Nay, dear Bevil, don't speak of her as if you loved her neither.

Bevil. Why then, to give you ease at once, though I allow Lucinda to have good sense, wit, beauty, and virtue, I know another in whom these qualities appear to me more amiable than in her.

Myr. There you spoke like a reasonable and good-natured friend. When you acknowledge her merit, and own your prepossession for another, at once you gratify my fondness, and cure my jealousy.

Bevil. But all this while you take no notice, you have no apprehension of another man that has twice the fortune of either of us.

Myr. Cimberton? Hang him, a formal, philosophical, pedantic coxcomb!—for the sot, with all these crude notions of divers things, under the direction of great vanity, and very little judgment, shows his strongest bias is avarice; which is so predominant in him, that he will examine the limbs of his mistress with the caution of a jockey, and pays no more compliment to her personal charms than if she were a mere breeding animal.

Bevil. Are you sure that is not affected? I have

known some women sooner set on fire by that sort of negligence, than by all the blaze and ceremony of a court.

Myr. No, no, hang him! the rogue has no art; it is pure simple insolence and stupidity.

Bevil. Yet with all this I don't take him for a fool.

Myr. I own the man is not a natural; he has a very quick sense, though a very slow understanding; he says indeed many things that want only the circumstances of time and place to be very just and agreeable.

Bevil. Well, you may be sure of me if you can disappoint him; but my intelligence says, the mother has actually sent for the conveyancer to draw articles for his marriage with Lucinda, though those for mine with her are, by her father's order, ready for signing; but it seems she has not thought fit to consult either him or his daughter in the matter.

Myr. Pshaw! a poor troublesome woman!—Neither Lucinda nor her father will ever be brought to comply with it; besides, I am sure Cimberton can make no settlement upon her without the concurrence of his great uncle, sir Geoffry, in the west.

Bevil. Well, sir, and I can tell you that's the very point that is now laid before her counsel, to know whether a firm settlement can be made without this uncle's actually joining in it.—Now, pray consider, sir, when my affair with Lucinda comes, as it soon must, to an open rupture, how are you sure that Cimberton's fortune may not then tempt her father too to hear his proposals?

Myr. There you are right indeed; that must be provided against.—Do you know who are her counsel?

Bevil. Yes, for your service, I have found out that too; they are sergeant Bramble and old Target.—By the way, they are neither of 'em known in the family; now I was thinking why you might not put a couple of false counsel upon her, to delay and confound matters a little; besides, it may probably let you into the bottom of her whole design against you.

Myr. As how, pray?

Bevil. Why, can't you slip on a black wig and a gown, and be old Bramble yourself?

Myr. Ha! I don't dislike it. But what shall I do for a brother in the case?

Bevil. What think you of my fellow Tom? The rogue's intelligent, and is a good mimic; all his part will be but to stutler heartily, for that's old Target's case.—Nay, it would be an immoral thing to mock him, were it not that his impatience is the occasion of its breaking out to that degree.—The conduct of the scene will chiefly lie upon you.

Myr. I like it of all things; if you'll send Tom to my chambers, I will give him full instructions. This will certainly give me occasion to raise difficulties, to puzzle or confound her project for awhile at least.

Bevil. I warrant you success; so far we are right then. And now, Charles, your apprehension of my marrying her is all you have to get over.

Myr. Dear Bevil! though I know you are my friend, yet, when I abstract myself from my own interest in the thing, I know no objection she can make to you, or you to her, and therefore hope——

Bevil. Dear Myrtle! I am as much obliged to you for the cause of your suspicion, as I am offended at the effect; but be assured I am taking measures for your certain security, and that all things with regard to me will end in your entire satisfaction.

Myr. Well, I'll promise you to be as easy and as confident as I can; though I cannot but remember that I have more than life at stake on your fidelity. [Going.

Bevil. Then depend upon it you have no chance against you.

Myr. Nay, no ceremony; you know I must be going. [Exit.

Bevil. Well, this is another instance of the perplexities which arise too in faithful friendship. But all this while poor Indiana is tortured with the doubt of me. I'll take this opportunity to visit her; for though the religious vow I have made to my father restrains me from ever marrying without his approbation, yet that confines me not from seeing a virtuous woman, that is the pure

delight of my eyes, and the guiltless joy of my heart. But the best condition of human life is but a gentler misery.

To hope for perfect happiness is vain,
And love has ever its allays of pain.

[Exit.]

SCENE II. INDIANA'S Lodgings.

Enter ISABELLA and INDIANA.

Isa. Yes—I say 'tis artifice, dear child! I say to thee, again and again, 'tis all skill and management.

Ind. Will you persuade me there can be an ill design in supporting me in the condition of a woman of quality; attended, dress'd, and lodg'd like one in my appearance abroad, and my furniture at home every way in the most sumptuous manner; and he that does it has an artifice, a design in it?

Isa. Yes, yes.

Ind. And all this without so much as explaining to me that all about me comes from him.

Isa. Ay, ay, the more for that; that keeps the title to all you have the more in him.

Ind. The more in him!—he scorns the thought——

Isa. Then he—he—he——

Ind. Well, be not so eager. If he is an ill man let's look into his stratagems; here is another of them. [Shows a Letter] Here's two hundred and fifty pounds in bank notes. Why, dear aunt, now here's another piece of skill for you, which I own I cannot comprehend; and it is with a bleeding heart I hear you say any thing to the disadvantage of Mr. Bevil. When he is present I look upon him as one to whom I owe my life, and the support of it; then again, as the man who loves me with sincerity and honour. When his eyes are cast another way, and I dare survey him, my heart is painfully divided between shame and love. I say thus it is with me while I see him; and in his absence, I am entertained with nothing but your endeavours to tear this amiable image from my heart, and in its stead to place a base dissembler, an artful invader of my happiness, my innocence, my honour.

Isa. Ah, poor soul! has not his plot taken? Don't you die for him? has not the way he has taken been the most proper with you? Oh, ho! he has sense, and has judged the thing right.

Ind. Go on then, since nothing can answer you; say what you will of him.—Heigho!

Isa. Heigho! indeed. It is better to say so as you are now, than as many others are. There are among the destroyers of women the gentle, the generous, the mild, the affable, the humble; who all, soon after their success in their designs, turn to the contrary of those characters. They embrace without love, they make vows without conscience of obligation; they are partners, nay, seducers, to the crime, wherein they pretend to be less guilty.

Ind. That's truly observed. [*Aside*] But what's all this to Bevil?

Isa. This is to Bevil and all mankind. Won't you be on your guard against those who would betray you? won't you doubt those who would condemn you for believing 'em?—Such is the world, and such (since the behaviour of one man to myself) have I believed all the rest of the sex. [*Aside.*]

Ind. I will not doubt the truth of Bevil, I will not doubt it; he has not spoken it by an organ that is given to lying: his eyes are all that have ever told me that he was mine. I know his virtue, I know his filial piety, and ought to trust his management with a father to whom he has uncommon obligations. What have I to be concerned for? My lesson is very short. If he takes me for ever, my purpose of life is only to please him; if he leaves me, (which heaven avert!) I know he'll do it nobly; and I shall have nothing to do but to learn to die, after worse than death has happened to me.

Isa. Ay, do persist in your credulity! flatter yourself that a man of his figure and fortune will make himself the jest of the town, and marry a handsome beggar for love.

Ind. The town! I must tell you, madam, the fools that laugh at Mr. Bevil will but make themselves more

ridiculous; his actions are the result of thinking, and he has sense enough to make even virtue fashionable.

Isa. Come, come, if he were the honest fool you take him for, why has he kept you here these three weeks, without sending you to Bristol in search of your father, your family, and your relations?

Ind. I am convinced he still designs it; besides, has he not writ to Bristol? and has not he advice that my father has not been heard of there almost these twenty years?

Isa. All sham, mere evasion; he is afraid, if he should carry you thither, your honest relations may take you out of his hands, and so blow up all his wicked hopes at once.

Ind. Wicked hopes! Did I ever give him any such?

Isa. Has he ever given you any honest ones? Can you say in your conscience he has ever once offered to marry you?

Ind. No; but by his behaviour I am convinced he will offer it the moment 'tis in his power, or consistent with his honour, to make such a promise good to me.

Isa. His honour! -

Ind. I will rely upon it; therefore desire you will not make my life uneasy by these ungrateful jealousies of one to whom I am and wish to be obliged; for from his integrity alone I have resolved to hope for happiness.

Isa. Nay, I have done my duty; if you won't see, at your peril be it.

Ind. Let it be.—This is his hour of visiting me. [Aside] All the rest of my life is but waiting till he comes: I live only when I'm with him. [Exit.

Isa. Well, go thy way, thou wilful innocent! I once had almost as much love for a man who poorly left me to marry an estate; and I am now, against my will, what they call an old maid: but I will not let the peevishness of that condition grow upon me; only keep up the suspicion of it to prevent this creature's being any other than a virgin, except upon proper terms.

[Exit.

Re-enter INDIANA, speaking to a Servant.

Ind. Desire Mr. Bevil to walk in.—Design! impossible! a base, designing mind could never think of what he hourly puts in practice; and yet, since the late rumour of his marriage, he seems more reserved than formerly; he sends in too before he sees me, to know if I am at leisure. Such new respect may cover coldness in the heart. It certainly makes me thoughtful.—I'll know the worst at once. I'll lay such fair occasions in his way, that it shall be impossible to avoid an explanation; for these doubts are insupportable.—But see he comes and clears them all.

Enter BEVIL.

Bevil. Madam, your most obedient. I am afraid I broke in upon your rest last night; 'twas very late before we parted; but 'twas your own fault; I never saw you in such agreeable humour.

Ind. I am extremely glad we were both pleased; for I thought I never saw you better company.

Bevil. Me, madam? you rally; I said very little.

Ind. But I am afraid you heard me say a great deal; and when a woman is in the talking vein, the most agreeable thing a man can do, you know, is to have patience to hear her.

Bevil. Then it's a pity, madam, you should ever be silent, that we might be always agreeable to one another.

Ind. If I had your talent or power to make my actions speak for me, I might indeed be silent, and yet pretend to something more than the agreeable.

Bevil. If I might be vain of any thing in my power, madam, it is that my understanding from all your sex has marked you out as the most deserving object of my esteem.

Ind. Should I think I deserve this, it were enough to make my vanity forfeit the very esteem you offer me.

Bevil. How so, madam?

Ind. Because esteem is the result of reason; and to

deserve it from good sense the height of human glory. Nay, I had rather a man of honour should pay me that, than all the homage of a sincere and humble love.

Bevil. You certainly distinguish right, madam; love often kindles from external merit only.

Ind. But esteem arises from a higher source, the merit of the soul.

Bevil. True; and great souls only can deserve it.

[*Bows respectfully.*]

Ind. Now I think they are greater still that can so charitably part with it.

Bevil. Now, madam, you make me vain, since the utmost pride and pleasure of my life is that I esteem you—as I ought.

Ind. As he ought! Still more perplexing! he neither saves nor kills my hope.

[*Aside.*]

Bevil. But, madam, we grow grave, methinks. Let's find some other subject.—Pray how did you like the opera last night?

Ind. First give me leave to thank you for my tickets.

Bevil. Oh! your servant, madam.

Ind. Now once more, to try him. [*Aside*] I was saying just now, I believe, you would never let me dispute with you, and I dare say it will always be so: however, I must have your opinion upon a subject which created a debate betwixt my aunt and me just before you came hither. She would needs have it that no man ever does any extraordinary kindness or service for a woman, but for his own sake.

Bevil. Well, madam, indeed I can't but be of her mind.

Ind. What, though he would maintain and support her, without demanding any thing of her on her part?

Bevil. Why, madam, is making an expense in the service of a valuable woman (for such I must suppose her), though she should never do him any favour, nay, though she should never know who did her such service, such a mighty heroic business?

Ind. Certainly! I should think he must be a man of an uncommon mould.

Bevil. Dear madam, why so? 'tis but at best a better taste in expense. To bestow upon one whom he may think one of the ornaments of the whole creation; to be conscious that from his superfluity an innocent, a virtuous spirit is supported above the temptations, the sorrows of life; that he sees satisfaction, health, and gladness in her countenance, while he enjoys the happiness of seeing her (as that I will suppose too, or he must be too abstracted, too insensible): I say, if he is allowed to delight in that prospect, alas! what mighty matter is there in all this?

Ind. No mighty matter in so disinterested a friendship.

Bevil. Disinterested! I can't think him so. Your hero, madam, is no more than what every gentleman ought to be, and I believe very many are: he is only one who takes more delight in reflections than in sensations; he is more pleased with thinking than eating; that's the utmost you can say of him. Why, madam, a greater expense than all this men lay out upon an unnecessary stable of horses.

Ind. Can you be sincere in what you say?

Bevil. You may depend upon it, if you know any such man, he does not love dogs inordinately.

Ind. No, that he does not.

Bevil. Nor cards nor dice.

Ind. No.

Bevil. Nor bottle companions.

Ind. No.

Bevil. Nor loose women.

Ind. No, I'm sure he does not.

Bevil. Take my word then, if your admired hero is not liable to any of these kind of demands, there's no such pre-eminence in this as you imagine: nay, this way of expense you speak of is what exalts and raises him that has a taste for it, and at the same time his delight is incapable of satiety, disgust, or penitence.

Ind. But still I insist his having no private interest in the action makes it prodigious, almost incredible.

Bevil. Dear madam, I never knew you more mistaken.

Why, who can be more an usurer than he who lays out his money in such valuable purchases? If pleasure be worth purchasing, how great a pleasure is it to him who has a true taste of life to ease an aching heart, to see the human countenance lighted up into smiles of joy on the receipt of a bit of ore which is superfluous and otherwise useless in a man's own pocket! What could a man do better with his cash? This is the effect of a humane disposition, where there is only a general tie of nature and common necessity; what then must it be when we serve an object of merit, of admiration?

Ind. Well, the more you argue against it, the more I shall admire the generosity.

Bevil. Nay then, madam, 'tis time to fly, after a declaration that my opinion strengthens my adversary's argument. I had best hasten to my appointment with Mr. Myrtle, and be gone while we are friends, and—before things are brought to an extremity.

[*Exit carelessly.*]

Re-enter ISABELLA.

Isa. Well, madam, what think you of him now, pray?

Ind. I protest I begin to fear he is wholly disinterested in what he does for me. On my heart, he has no other view but the mere pleasure of doing it, and has neither good or bad designs upon me.

Isa. Ah, dear niece! don't be in fear of both; I'll warrant you you will know time enough that he is not indifferent.

Ind. You please me when you tell me so; for if he has any wishes towards me, I know he will not pursue them but with honour.

Isa. I wish I were as confident of one as t'other.—I saw the respectful downcast of his eye when you catch'd him gazing at you during the music. Oh, the undissembled, guilty look!

Ind. But did you observe any thing really? I thought he looked most charmingly graceful. How engaging is modesty in a man, when one knows there is a great mind within!

Isa. Ah, niece! some men's modesty serves their wickèdness, as hypocrisy gains the respect due to piety. But I will own to you there is one hopeful symptom, if there could be such a thing as a disinterested lover; but till—till—till——

Ind. Till what?

Isa. Till I know whether Mr. Myrtle and Mr. Bevil are really friends or foes: and that I will be convinced of before I sleep; for you shall not be deceived. [*Exit.*

Ind. I'm sure I never shall, if your fears can guard me. In the mean time, I'll wrap myself up in the integrity of my own heart, nor dare to doubt of his.

As conscious honour all his actions steers,

So conscious innocence dispels my fears.

[*Exit.*

ACT THE THIRD.



SCENE I. SEALAND'S House.

Enter TOM, meeting PHILLIS.

Tom. Well, Phillis!—What! with a face as if you had never seen me before?—What a work have I to do now! She has seen some new visitant at their house whose airs she has catch'd, and is resolved to practise them upon me. Numberless are the changes she'll dance through before she'll answer this plain question, videlicet, Have you delivered my master's letter to your lady? Nay, I know her too well to ask an account of it in an ordinary way; I'll be in my airs as well as she. [*Aside*] Well, madam, as unhappy as you are at present pleased to make me, I would not in the general be any other than what I am; I would not be a bit wiser, a bit richer, a bit taller, a bit shorter, than I am at this instant. [*Looks stedfastly at her.*]

Phil. Did ever any body doubt, master Thomas, but that you were extremely satisfied with your sweet self?

Tom. I am indeed. The thing I have least reason to

be satisfied with is my fortune, and I am glad of my poverty : perhaps, if I were rich, I should overlook the finest woman in the world, that wants nothing but riches to be thought so.

Phil. How prettily was that said ! But I'll have a great deal more before I'll say one word. [*Aside.*]

Tom. I should perhaps have been stupidly above her had I not been her equal ; and by not being her equal, never had opportunity of being her slave. I am my master's servant for hire, I am my mistress's from choice, would she but approve my passion.

Phil. I think it is the first time I ever heard you speak of it with any sense of anguish, if you really do suffer any.

Tom. Ah, Phillis ! can you doubt after what you have seen ?

Phil. I know not what I have seen nor what I have heard ; but since I am at leisure, you may tell me when you fell in love with me, how you fell in love with me, and what you have suffered, or are ready to suffer, for me.

Tom. Oh, the unmerciful jade ! when I'm in haste about my master's letter ; but I must go through it. [*Aside*] Ah ! too well I remember when, and how, and on what occasion, I was first surprised. It was on the first of April, one thousand seven hundred and fifteen, I came into Mr. Sealand's service. I was then a hobble-de-boy, and you a pretty, little, tight girl, a favourite handmaid of the housekeeper. At that time we neither of us knew what was in us. I remember I was ordered to get out of the window, one pair of stairs, to rub the sashes clean ; the person employed on the inner side was your charming self, whom I had never seen before.

Phil. I think I remember the silly accident. What made ye, you oaf, ready to fall down into the street ?

Tom. You know not, I warrant you ; you could not guess what surprised me ; you took no delight when you immediately grew wanton in your conquest, and put your lips close and breath'd upon the glass ; and when my lips approached, you rubbed a dirty cloth

against my face, and hid your beauteous form; when I again drew near, you spit and rubbed, and smiled at my undoing.

Phil. What silly thoughts you men have!

Tom. We were Pyramus and Thisbe; but ten times harder was my fate: Pyramus could peep only through a wall; I saw her, saw my Thisbe, in all her beauty; but as much kept from her as if a hundred walls were between; for there was more, there was her will against me. Would she but relent!—Oh, Phillis! Phillis! shorten my torment, and declare you pity me.

Phil. I believe it's very sufferable; the pain is not so exquisite but that you may bear it a little longer.

Tom. Oh, my charming Phillis! if all depended on my fair one's will, I could with glory suffer; but, dearest creature! consider our miserable state.

Phil. How! miserable?

Tom. We are miserable to be in love, and under the command of others than those we love. With that generous passion in the heart to be sent to and fro on errands, called, checked, and rated, for the meanest trifles—Oh, Phillis! you don't know how many china cups and glasses my passion for you has made me break: you have broken my fortune as well as my heart.

Phil. Well, Mr. Thomas, I cannot but own to you that I believe your master writes and you speak the best of any men in the world. Never was a woman so well pleased with a letter as my young lady was with his, and this is an answer to it. [*Gives him a Letter.*]

Tom. This was well done, my dearest! Consider, we must strike out some pretty livelihood for ourselves by closing their affairs: it will be nothing for them to give us a little being of our own, some small tenement, out of their large possessions. Whatever they give us, it will be more than what they keep for themselves: one acre with Phillis would be worth a whole county without her.

Phil. Oh, could I but believe you!

Tom. If not the utterance, believe the touch, of my lips. [*Kisses her.*]

Phil. There's no contradicting you. How closely you argue, Tom!

Tom. And will closer in due time; but I must hasten with this letter, to hasten towards the possession of you—then, Phillis, consider how I must be reveng'd (look to it) of all your skittishness, shy looks, and at best, but coy compliances.

Phil. Oh, Tom! you grow wanton and sensual, as my lady calls it: I must not endure it. Oh, foh! you are a man, an odious, filthy, male creature! you should behave, if you had a right sense, or were a man of sense, like Mr. Cimberton, with distance and indifference; and not rush on one as if you were seizing a prey. But hush—the ladies are coming. Good Tom, don't kiss me above once, and be gone. Lard! we have been fooling and toying, and not consider'd the main business of our masters' and mistresses'.

Tom. Why their business is to be fooling and toying as soon as the parchments are ready.

Phil. Well remembered—Parchments. My lady, to my knowledge, is preparing writings between her coxcomb cousin, Cimberton, and my mistress, though my master has an eye to the parchments already prepared between your master, Mr. Bevil, and my mistress; and I believe my mistress herself has signed and sealed in her heart to Mr. Myrtle. Did I not bid you kiss me but once and be gone? but I know you won't be satisfied.

Tom. No, you smooth creature! how should I?

[*Kisses her Hand.*]

Phil. Well, since you are so humble, or so cool, as to ravish my hand only, I'll take my leave of you like a great lady, and you a man of quality.

[*They salute formally.*]

Tom. Plague of all this state.

[*Offers to kiss her more closely.*]

Phil. No, pr'ythee, Tom, mind your business. Oh, here is my young mistress! [*Tom taps her Neck behind, and kisses his Fingers*] Go, ye liquorish fool.

[*Exit Tom.*]

Enter LUCINDA.

Luc. Who was that you were hurrying away?

Phil. One that I had no mind to part with.

Luc. Why did you turn him away then?

Phil. For your ladyship's service, to carry your ladyship's letter to his master. I could hardly get the rogue away.

Luc. Why, has he so little love for his master?

Phil. No, but he has so much love for his mistress.

Luc. But I thought I heard him kiss you: why do you suffer that?

Phil. Why, madam, we vulgar take it to be a sign of love. We servants, we poor people, that have nothing but our persons to bestow or treat for, squeeze with our hands, and seal with our lips, to ratify vows and promises.

Luc. But can't you trust one another without such earnest down?

Phil. We don't think it safe, any more than you gentry, to come together without deeds executed.

Luc. Thou art a pert merry hussy.

Phil. I wish, madam, your lover and you were as happy as Tom and your servant are.

Luc. You grow impertinent.

Phil. I have done, madam; and I won't ask you what you intend to do with Mr. Myrtle; what your father will do with Mr. Bevil; nor what you all, especially my lady, mean by admitting Mr. Cimberton as particularly here as if he were married to you already; nay, you are married actually as far as people of quality are.

Luc. How's that?

Phil. You have different beds in the same house.

Luc. Pshaw! I have a very great value for Mr. Bevil, but have absolutely put an end to his pretensions in the letter I gave you for him.

Phil. Then Mr. Myrtle——

Luc. He had my parents' leave to apply to me, and

by that he has won me and my affections; who is to have this body of mine without 'em, it seems, is nothing to me: my mother says 'tis indecent for me to let my thoughts stray about the person of my husband; nay, she says a maid rightly virtuous, though she may have been where her lover was a thousand times, should not have made observations enough to know him from another man when she sees him in a third place.

Phil. That's more than the severity of a nun; for not to see when one may is hardly possible; not to see when one can't is very easy: at this rate, madam, there are a great many whom you have not seen who——

Luc. Mamma says the first time you see your husband should be at that instant he is made so. When your father, with the help of the minister, gives you to him, then you are to see him, then you are to observe and take notice of him, because then you are to obey him.

Phil. But does not my lady remember you are to love as well as to obey?

Luc. To love is a passion, 'tis a desire; and we must have no desires. Oh! I cannot endure the reflection! With what insensibility on my part, with what more than patience, have I been expos'd and offer'd to some awkward booby or other in every county of Great Britain!

Phil. Indeed, madam, I wonder I never heard you speak of it before with this indignation.

Luc. Every corner of the land has presented me with a wealthy coxcomb: as fast as one treaty has gone off another has come on, till my name and person have been the tittle-tattle of the whole town.

Phil. But, madam, all these vexations will end very soon in one for all: Mr. Cimberton is your mother's kinsman, and three hundred years an older gentleman than any lover you ever had; for which reason, with that of his prodigious large estate, she is resolved on him, and has sent to consult the lawyers accordingly; nay, has, whether you know it or no, been in treaty with sir Geoffry, who, to join in the settlement, has

accepted of a sum to do it, and is every moment expected in town for that purpose.

Luc. How do you get all this intelligence?

Phil. By an art I have, I thank my stars, beyond all the waiting-maids in Great Britain; the art of listening, madam, for your ladyship's service.

Luc. I shall soon know as much as you do. Leave me, leave me, Phillis; be gone; here, here, I'll turn you out. My mother says I must not converse with my servants, though I must converse with no one else. [*Exit Phillis*] Here he comes with my mother—it's much if he looks at me; or if he does, takes no more notice of me than of any other moveable in the room.

Enter MRS. SEALAND and CIMBERTON.

Mrs. S. How do I admire this noble, this learned taste of yours, and the worthy regard you have to our own ancient and honourable house, in consulting a means to keep the blood as pure and as regularly descended as may be.

Cim. Why, really, madam, the young women of this age are treated with discourses of such a tendency, and their imaginations so bewilder'd in flesh and blood, that a man of reason can't talk to be understood: they have no ideas of happiness but what are more gross than the gratification of hunger and thirst.

Luc. With how much reflection he is a coxcomb!

[*Aside.*

Cim. And in truth, madam, I have considered it as a most brutal custom, that persons of the first character in the world should go as ordinarily, and with as little shame to bed, as to dinner with one another. They proceed to the propagation of the species as openly as to the preservation of the individual.

Luc. She that willingly goes to bed to thee must have no shame, I'm sure.

[*Aside.*

Mrs. S. Oh, cousin Cimberton! cousin Cimberton! how abstracted, how refined is your sense of things! but indeed it is too true, there is nothing so ordinary as to say, in the best govern'd families, my master and

lady are gone to bed ; one does not know but it might have been said of one's self.

[*Hides her Face with her Fan.*]

Cim. Lycurgus, madam, instituted otherwise : among the Lacedemonians the whole female world was pregnant, but none but the mothers themselves knew by whom ; their meetings were secret, and the amorous congress always by stealth ; and no such professed doings between the sexes as are tolerated among us, under the audacious word, marriage.

Mrs. S. Oh ! had I lived in those days, and been a matron of Sparta, one might, with less indecency, have had ten children, according to that modest institution, than one under the confusion of our modern barefac'd manner.

Luc. And yet, poor woman, she has gone through the whole ceremony, and here I stand a melancholy proof of it.

[*Aside.*]

Mrs. S. We will talk then of business. That girl, walking about the room there, is to be your wife : she has, I confess, no ideas, no sentiments, that speak her born of a thinking mother.

Cim. I have observed her ; her lively look, free air, and disengaged countenance, speak her very——

Luc. Very what ?

Cim. If you please, madam, to set her a little that way.

Mrs. S. Lucinda, say nothing to him, you are not a match for him ; when you are married you may speak to such a husband when you're spoken to ; but I am disposing of you above yourself every way.

Cim. Madam, you cannot but observe the inconveniences I expose myself to, in hopes that your ladyship will be the consort of my better part. As for the young woman, she is rather an impediment than a help to a man of letters and speculation. Madam, there is no reflection, no philosophy, can at all times subdue the sensitive life, but the animal shall sometimes carry away the man——Ha ! ay, the vermillion of her lips !

Luc. Pray don't talk of me thus.

Cim. The pretty enough pant of her bosom.

Luc. Sir! Madam, don't you hear him?

Cim. Her forward chest!

Luc. Intolerable!

Cim. High health!

Luc. The grave, easy impudence of him!

Cim. Proud heart!

Luc. Stupid coxcomb!

Cim. I say, madam, her impatience, while we are looking at her, throws out all attractions—her arms—her neck—what a spring in her step!

Luc. Don't you run me over thus, you strange unaccountable——

Cim. What an elasticity in her veins and arteries!

Luc. I have no veins, no arteries!

Mrs. S. Oh, child! hear him; he talks finely; he's a scholar; he knows what you have.

Cim. The speaking invitation of her shape, the gathering of herself up, and the indignation you see in the pretty little thing!—Now I am considering her on this occasion but as one that is to be pregnant; and pregnant undoubtedly she will be yearly: I fear I shan't for many years have discretion enough to give her one fallow season.

Luc. Monster! there's no bearing it. The hideous sot!—There's no enduring it, to be thus surveyed like a steed at sale!

Cim. At sale!—she's very illiterate; but she's very well limb'd too. Turn her in, I see what she is.

Mrs. S. Go, you creature, I am asham'd of you.

[*Exit Lucinda, in a Rage.*]

Cim. No harm done.—You know, madam, the better sort of people, as I observed to you, treat by their lawyers of weddings; [*Adjusts himself at the Glass*] and the woman in the bargain, like the mansion-house in the sale of the estate, is thrown in; and what that is, whether good or bad, is not at all considered.

Mrs. S. I grant it, and therefore make no demand for her youth and beauty, and every other accomplishment, as the common world think 'em, because she is not polite.

Cim. Madam, I marry to have an heir to my estate, and not to beget a colony or a plantation. This young woman's beauty and constitution will demand provision for a tenth child at least.

Mrs. S. But I have given directions for the marriage settlements, and sir Geoffry Cimberton's counsel is to meet ours here at this hour concerning his joining in the deed; which, when executed, makes you capable of settling what is due to Lucinda's fortune. Herself, as I told you, I say nothing of.

Cim. No, no, no; indeed, madam, it is not usual, and I must depend upon my own reflection and philosophy not to overstock my family.

Mrs. S. I cannot help her, cousin Cimberton; but she is, for aught I see, as well as the daughter of any body else.

Cim. That is very true, madam.

Enter a Servant, who whispers MRS. SEALAND.

Mrs. S. The lawyers are come, and now we are to hear what they have resolved as to the point whether it is necessary that sir Geoffry should join in the settlement, as being what they call in the remainder. But, good cousin, you must have patience with 'em. These lawyers I am told are of a different kind; one is what they call a chamber-counsel, the other a pleader: the conveyancer is slow, from an imperfection in his speech, and therefore shunned the bar, but extremely passionate, and impatient of contradiction: the other is as warm as he, but has a tongue so voluble, and a head so conceited, he will suffer nobody to speak but himself.

Cim. You mean old sergeant Target and counsellor Bramble: I have heard of 'em.

Mrs. S. The same. Show in the gentlemen.

[Exit Servant.]

Re-enter a Servant, introducing MYTLE and TOM, disguised as BRAMBLE and TARGET.

Gentlemen, this is the party concerned, Mr. Cimberton; and I hope you have considered of the matter.

Myr. Yes, madam, Mr. Sergeant and myself have agreed, as he is pleased to inform you, that it must be an indenture tripartite, and tripartite let it be, for so Geoffrey must needs be a party. Old Cimberton, in the year one thousand six hundred and nineteen, says, in that ancient roll in Mr. Sergeant's hands, as recourse thereto being had, will more at large appear.

Myr. Mr. Sergeant, I beg of you to make no inferences upon what is in our custody, but speak to the titles in your own deeds. I shall not show that deed till my client is in town.

Mrs. S. The single question is, whether the entail is such that my cousin sir Geoffry is necessary in this affair?

Tom. I say that Gr—gr—, that Gr—gr—, Grimgribber, Grimgribber is in us ; that is to say, the remainder thereof, as well as that of Tr—, Tr—, Triplet.

Tom. Sir, Gr—gr—ber is—

Myr. I apprehend you very well, and your argument might be of force, and we would be inclined to hear that in all its parts; but, sir, I see very plainly what

C. are going into; I tell you it is as probable a con-
 and gent that sir Geoffry may die before Mr. Cimberton,
 wo that he may outlive him.

for *Tom.* Sir, we are not ripe for that yet, but I must
 say—

Myr. Sir, I allow you the whole extent of that argu-
 ment; but that will go no further than as to the claim-
 ants under old Cimberton. I am of opinion, that,
 according to the instructions of sir Ralph, he could
 not dock the entail, and then create a new estate for
 the heirs in general.

Tom. Sir, I have no patience to be told that, when
 Gr—gr—ber—

Myr. I will allow it you, Mr. Sergeant; but there
 must be the words, heirs for ever, to make such an
 estate as you pretend.

Cim. I must be impartial, though you are counsel
 for my side of the question. Were it not that you are
 so good as to allow him what he has not said, I should
 think it very hard you should answer him without
 hearing him. But, gentlemen, I believe you have both
 considered this matter, and are firm in your different
 opinions: 'twere better, therefore, you proceed accord-
 ing to the particular sense of each of you, and give
 your thoughts distinctly in writing. And, do you see,
 sirs, pray let me have a copy of what you say in
 English.

Myr. Why, what is all we have been saying? In
 English! Oh! but I forgot myself; you're a wit. But,
 however, to please you, sir, you shall have it in as
 plain terms as the law will admit of.

Cim. But I would have it, sir, without delay.

Myr. That, sir, the law will not admit of. The courts
 are sitting at Westminster, and I am this moment
 obliged to be at every one of them, and 'twould be
 wrong if I should not be in the Hall to attend one of
 'em at least; the rest would take it ill wise: therefore I
 must leave what I have said to Mr. Sergeant's con-
 sideration, and I will digest his arguments on my part,
 and you shall hear from me again, sir. [Exit.

Tom. Agreed, agreed.

Cim. Mr. Bramble is very quick. He parted a little abruptly.

Tom. He could not bear my argument; I pinched him to the quick about that Gr—gr—ber.

Mrs. S. I saw that, for he durst not so much as hear you. I shall send to you, Mr. Sergeant, as soon as sir Geoffry comes to town, and then I hope all may be adjusted.

Tom. I shall be at my chambers at my usual hours.

[Exit.

Cim. Madam, if you please I'll now attend you to the tea-table, where I shall hear from your ladyship reason and good sense after all this law and gibberish.

Mrs. S. 'Tis a wonderful thing, sir, that men of their profession do not study to talk the substance of what they have to say in the language of the rest of the world; sure they'd find their account in it.

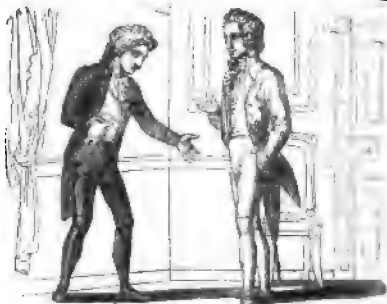
Cim. They might, perhaps, madam, with people of your good sense, but with the generality 'twould never do: the vulgar would have no respect for truth and knowledge if they were exposed to naked view.

Truth is too simple, of all art bereav'd;

Since the world will, why let it be deceiv'd.

[Exeunt.

ACT THE FOURTH.



SCENE I. BEVIL'S Lodgings.

Enter BEVIL, with a Letter in his Hand, followed by TOM.

Tom. Upon my life, sir, I know nothing of the matter; I never opened my lips to Mr. Myrtle about any thing of your honour's letter to madam Lucinda.

Bevil. What's the fool in such a fright for? I don't suppose you did. What I would know is, whether Mr. Myrtle showed any suspicion, or asked you any questions, to lead you to say casually that you had carried any such letter for me this morning?

Tom. Why, sir, if he did ask me any questions, how could I help it?

Bevil. I don't say you could, oaf! I am not questioning you, but him. What did he say to you?

Tom. Why, sir, when I came to his chambers, to be dressed for the lawyer's part your honour was pleased to put me upon, he asked me if I had been to Mr. Sealand's this morning? So I told him, sir, I often

went thither; because, sir, if I had not said that, he might have thought there was something more in my going now than at another time.

Bevil. Very well. The fellow's caution I find has given him this jealousy. [*Aside*] Did he ask you no other questions?

Tom. Yes, sir—now I remember as we came away in the hackney-coach from Mr. Sealand's; "Tom," says he, "as I came in to your master this morning, he bade you go for an answer to a letter he had sent; pray did you bring him any?" says he.—"Ah!" says I, "sir, your honour is pleased to joke with me; you have a mind to know whether I can keep a secret or no."

Bevil. And so, by showing him you could, you told him you had one.

Tom. Sir—

[*Confused.*]

Bevil. What mean actions does jealousy make a man sloop to! how poorly has he us'd art with a servant to make him betray his master! [*Aside*] Well, and when did he give you this letter for me?

Tom. Sir, he writ it before he pulled off his lawyer's gown at his own chambers.

Bevil. Very well, and what did he say when you brought him my answer to it?

Tom. He looked a little out of humour, sir, and said it was very well.

Bevil. I knew he would be grave upon't. [*Aside*] Wait without.

Tom. Hum! 'gad, I don't like this: I am afraid we are in the wrong box here.

[*Aside, and exit.*]

Bevil. I put on a serenity while my fellow was present, but I have never been more thoroughly disturbed. This hot man, to write me a challenge on supposed artificial dealing, when I profess'd myself his friend! I can live contented without glory, but I cannot suffer shame. What's to be done? But first, let me consider Lucinda's letter again. [*Reads*] Sir,—I hope it is consistent with the laws a woman ought to impose upon herself, to acknowledge that your manner of declining a treaty of marriage in our family, and desiring the

refusal may come from me, has something more engaging in it than the courtship of him who I fear will fall to my lot, except your friend exerts himself for our common safety and happiness. I have reasons for desiring Mr. Myrtle may not know of this letter till hereafter; and am your most obliged humble servant, LUCINDA SEALAND.—Well, but the postscript.—I won't, upon second thoughts, hide any thing from you: but my reason for concealing this is, that Mr. Myrtle has a jealousy in his temper, which gives me some terrors; but my esteem for him inclines me to hope that only an ill effect which sometimes accompanies a tender love, and what may be cured by a careful and unblameable conduct.—Thus has this lady made me her friend and confidant, and put herself in a kind under my protection. I cannot tell him immediately the purport of her letter, except I could cure him of the violent and untractable passion of jealousy, and to serve him and her, by disobeying her in the article of secrecy, more than I should by complying with her directions. But then this duelling, which custom has imposed upon every man who would live with reputation and honour in the world, how must I preserve myself from imputations there? he'll forsooth call it, or think it fear, if I explain without fighting.—But his letter; I'll read it again. [Reads] Sir,—You have used me basely, in corresponding and carrying on a treaty where you told me you were indifferent. I have changed my sword since I saw you; which advertisement I thought proper to send you against the next meeting between you and the injured

CHARLES MYRTLE.

Re-enter TOM.

Tom. Mr. Myrtle, sir: would your honour please to see him?

Bevil. Why, you stupid creature, let Mr. Myrtle wait at my lodgings! Show him up. [Exit Tom] Well, I am resolved upon my carriage to him; he is in love, and in every circumstance of life a little distrustful, which I must allow for. But here he is.

Re-enter TOM, introducing MYRTLE.

Sir, I am extremely obliged to you for this honour. But, sir, you, with your very discerning face, leave the room. [*Exit Tom*] Well, Mr. Myrtle, your commands with me?

Myr. The time, the place, our long acquaintance, and many other circumstances which affect me on this occasion, oblige me, without further ceremony or conference, to desire you would not only, as you already have, acknowledge the receipt of my letter, but also comply with the request in it. I must have further notice taken of my message than these half lines. I have yours. I shall be at home.

Bevil. Sir, I own I have received a letter from you in a very unusual style, but as I design every thing in this matter shall be your own action, your own seeking, I shall understand nothing but what you are pleased to confirm face to face; and I have already forgot the contents of your epistle.

Myr. This cool manner is very agreeable to the abuse you have already made of my simplicity and frankness, and I see your moderation tends to your own advantage and not mine, to your own safety, not consideration of your friend.

Bevil. My own safety, Mr. Myrtle?

Myr. Your own safety, Mr. Bevil.

Bevil. Look you, Mr. Myrtle, there's no disguising that I understand what you would be at: but, sir, you know I have often dared to disapprove of the decisions a tyrant custom has introduced to the breach of all laws, both divine and human.

Myr. Mr. Bevil, Mr. Bevil! it would be a good first principle, in those who have so tender a conscience that way, to have as much abhorrence of doing injuries as—

Bevil. As what?

Myr. As fear of answering for 'em.

Bevil. As fear of answering for 'em? But that apprehension is just or blameable according to the object of that fear. I have often told you, in confidence of heart, I abhorred the daring to offend the Author of life, and

rushing into his presence. I say, by the very same act, to commit the crime against him, and immediately to urge on to his tribunal.

Myr. Mr. Bevil, I must tell you this coolness, this gravity, this show of conscience, shall never cheat me of my mistress. You have indeed the best excuse for life, the hopes of possessing Lucinda; but consider, sir, I have as much reason to be weary of it if I am to lose her; and my first attempt to recover her shall be to let her see the dauntless man who is to be her guardian and protector.

Bevil. Sir, show me but the least glimpse of argument that I am authorised, by my own hand, to vindicate any lawless insult of this nature, and I will show thee to chastise thee hardly deserves the name of courage. Slight inconsiderate man! There is, Mr. Myrtle, no such terror in quick anger, and you shall you know not why be cool, as you have you know not why you have been warm.

Myr. Is the woman one loves so little an occasion of anger? You perhaps, who know not what it is to love, who have your ready, your commodious, your foreign trinket, for your loose hours, and from your fortune, your specious outward carriage, and other lucky circumstances, as easy a way to the possession of a woman of honour, you know nothing of what it is to be alarmed, to be distracted, with anxiety and terror of losing more than life. Your marriage, happy man! goes on like common business; and in the interim you have your rambling captive, your Indian princess; for your soft moments of dalliance, your convenient, your ready Indiana.

Bevil. You have touched me beyond the patience of a man, and I'm excusable in the guard of innocence, or from the infirmity of human nature, which can bear no more, to accept your invitation and observe your letter. Sir, I'll attend you.

Re-enter Tom.

Tom. Did you call, sir? I thought you did; I heard you speak aloud.

Bevil. Yes; go call a coach.

Tom. Sir—Master—Mr. Myrtle—Friends—Gentlemen, what d'ye mean? I'm but a servant, or——

Bevil. Call a coach. [*Exit Tom. A long Pause; they Walk sullenly by each other*] Shall I, though provoked to the uttermost, recover myself at the entrance of a third person, and that my servant too, and not have respect enough to all I have ever been receiving from infancy, the obligation to the best of fathers, to an unhappy virgin too, whose life depends on mine? [*Aside. Shuts the Door*] I have, thank heaven, had time to recollect myself, and shall not, for fear of what such a rash man as you think of me, keep longer unexplained the false appearances under which your infirmity of temper makes you suffer, when perhaps too much regard to a false point of honour makes me prolong that suffering.

Myr. I am sure Mr. Bevil cannot doubt but I had rather have satisfaction from his innocence than his sword.

Bevil. Why then would you ask it first that way?

Myr. Consider, you kept your temper yourself no longer than till I spoke to the disadvantage of her you loved.

Bevil. True. But let me tell you, I have saved you from the most exquisite distress, even though you had succeeded in the dispute. I know you so well, that I am sure to have found this letter about a man you had killed would have been worse than death to yourself. Read it.—When he is thoroughly mortified, and shame has got the better of jealousy, he will deserve to be assisted towards obtaining Lucinda. [*Aside.*

Myr. With what a superiority has he turn'd the injury on me as the aggressor! I begin to fear I have been too far transported. Is not that saying too much? I shall relapse——But I find (on the postscript)—With what face can I see my benefactor, my advocate, whom I have treated like a betrayer? [*Aside*] Oh, Bevil! with what words shall I——

Bevil. There needs none; to convince is much more than to conquer.

Myr. But can you——

Bevil. You have overpaid the inquietude you gave me in the change I see in you towards me. Alas! what machines are we! thy face is alter'd to that of another man, to that of my companion, my friend.

Myr. That I could be such a precipitate wretch!

Bevil. Pray, no more.

Myr. Let me reflect how many friends have died by the hands of friends for want of temper; and you must give me leave to say, again and again, how much I am beholden to that superior spirit you have subdued me with. What had become of one of us, or perhaps both, had you been as weak as I was, and as incapable of reason?

Bevil. I congratulate to us both the escape from ourselves, and hope the memory of it will make us dearer friends than ever.

Myr. Dear *Bevil*! your friendly conduct has convinced me that there is nothing manly but what is conducted by reason, and agreeable to the practise of virtue and justice; and yet how many have been sacrificed to that idol, the unreasonable opinion of men! Nay, they are so ridiculous in it, that they often use their swords against each other with dissembled anger and real fear.

Betray'd by honour, and compell'd by shame,

They hazard being to preserve a name;

Nor dare inquire into the dread mistake

Till plung'd in sad eternity they wake. [Exeunt.

SCENE II. ST. JAMES'S PARK.

Enter SIR JOHN BEVIL and SEALAND.

Sir J. Give me leave, however, Mr. Sealand, as we are upon a treaty for uniting our families, to mention only the business of an ancient house. Genealogy and descent are to be of some consideration in an affair of this sort.

Seal. Genealogy and descent! Sir John, value yourself as you please upon your ancient house, I am to talk freely of every thing you are pleased to put into your bill of rates on this occasion. Yet, sir, I have

made no objections to your son's family; it is his morals that I doubt.

Sir J. Sir, I can't help saying, that what might injure a citizen's credit, may be no stain to a gentleman's honour.

Seal. Sir John, the honour of a gentleman is liable to be tainted by as small a matter as the credit of a trader: we are talking of a marriage; and in such a case, the father of a young woman will not think it an addition to the honour or credit of her lover, that he is a keeper——

Sir J. Mr. Sealand, don't take upon you to spoil my son's marriage with any woman else.

Seal. Sir John, let him apply to any woman else, and have as many mistresses as he pleases.

Sir J. My son, sir, is a discreet and sober gentleman.

Seal. Sir, I never saw a man that wench'd soberly and discreetly that ever left it off; the decency observed in the practice, hides even from the sinner the iniquity of it.

Sir J. But, my son, sir, is in the eye of the world a gentleman of merit.

Seal. I own to you I think him so. But, sir John, I am a man exercised and experienced in chances and disasters; I lost in my early years a very fine wife, and with her a poor little infant: this makes me perhaps over cautious to preserve the second bounty of Providence to me, and be as careful as I can of this child.—You'll pardon me; my poor girl, sir, is as valuable to me as your boasted son to you.

Sir J. Why, that's one very good reason, Mr. Sealand, why I wish my son had her.

Seal. There is nothing but this strange lady here, this incognita, that can be objected to him. Here and there a man falls in love with an artful creature, and gives up all the motives of life to that one passion.

Sir J. A man of my son's understanding cannot be supposed to be one of them.

Seal. Very wise men have been so enslaved; and when a man marries with one of them upon his hands,

whether moved from the demand of the world, or slighter reasons, such a husband soils with his wife for a month perhaps; then good by, madam; the show's over.—Ah! John Dryden points out such a husband to a hair, where he says,

“And while abroad so prodigal the dolt is,
Poor spouse at home as ragged as a colt is.”

Now, in plain terms, sir, I shall not care to have my poor girl turn'd a grazing; and that must be the case when——

Sir J. But pray consider, sir, my son——

Seal. Look you, sir, I'll make the matter short.—This unknown lady, as I told you, is all the objection I have to him: but one way or other he is or has been certainly engaged to her. I am therefore resolved this very afternoon to visit her. Now, from her behaviour or appearance, I shall soon be let into what I may fear or hope for.

Sir J. Sir, I am very confident there can be nothing inquired into relating to my son, that will not, upon being understood, turn to his advantage.

Seal. I hope that as sincerely as you believe it.—Sir John Bevil, when I am satisfied in this great point, if your son's conduct answers the character you give him, I shall wish your alliance more than that of any gentleman in Great Britain; and so your servant. [*Exit.*]

Sir J. He is gone in a way but barely civil; but his great wealth, and the merit of his only child, the heiress of it, are not to be lost for a little peevishness. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III. BEVIL'S Lodgings.

Enter TOM and PHILLIS.

Tom. Well, madam, if you must speak with Mr. Myrtle, you shall: he is now with my master in the library.

Phil. But you must leave me alone with him, for he can't make me a present, nor I so handsomely take any thing from him before you; it would not be decent.

Tom. It will be very decent indeed for me to retire, and leave my mistress with another man!

Phil. He is a gentleman, and will treat one properly.

Tom. I believe so; but however I won't be far off, and therefore will venture to trust you. I'll call him to you. [Exit.

Phil. What a deal of pother and sputter here is between my mistress and Mr. Myrtle from mere punctilio! I could, any hour of the day, get her to her lover, and would do it; but she, forsooth, will allow no plot to get him; but if he can come to her, I know she would be glad of it. I must therefore do her an acceptable violence, and surprise her into his arms. I am sure I go by the best rule imaginable: if she were my maid, I should think her the best servant in the world for doing so by me.

Re-enter TOM, with MYRTLE.

Oh, sir! you and Mr. Bevil are fine gentlemen, to let a lady remain under such difficulties as my poor mistress, and not attempt to set her at liberty, or release her from the danger of being instantly married to Cimberton.

Myr. Tom has been telling—but what is to be done?

Phil. What is to be done?—When a man can't come at his mistress, why can't you fire our house, or the next house to us, to make us run out, and you take us?

Myr. How, Mrs. Phillis?

Phil. Ay, let me see that rogue deny to fire a house, make a riot, or any other little thing, when there were no other way to come at me.

Tom. I am obliged to you, madam.

Phil. Why, don't we hear every day of people's hanging themselves for love, and won't they venture the hazard of being hanged for love?—Oh! were I a man——

Myr. What manly thing would you have me undertake, according to your ladyship's notion of a man?

Phil. Only be at once what one time or other you may be, and wish to be, and must be.

Myr. Dear girl! talk plainly to me, and consider I, in my condition, can't be in very good humour. You say, to be at once what I must be.

Phil. Ay, ay; I mean no more than to be an old man.

In a word, old sir Geoffry Cimberton is every hour expected in town to join in the deeds and settlements for marrying Mr. Cimberton. He is half blind, half lame, half deaf, half dumb; though, as to his passions and desires, he is as warm and ridiculous as when in the heat of youth.

Tom. Come, to the business; and don't keep the gentleman in suspense for the pleasure of being courted, as you serve me.

Phil. I saw you at the masquerade act such a one to perfection. Go and put on that very habit, and come to our house as sir Geoffry. There is not one there but myself knows his person. I was born in the parish where he is lord of the manor; I have seen him often and often at church in the country. Do not hesitate, but come thither. They will think you bring a certain security against Mr. Myrtle, and you bring Mr. Myrtle. Leave the rest to me. I leave this with you, and expect — 'They don't, I told you, know you; they think you out of town; which you had as good be for ever, if you lose this opportunity. — I must be gone; I know I am wanted at home.

Myr. My dear Phillis!

[Catches and kisses her, and gives her Money.]

Phil. Oh, fie! my kisses are not my own; you have committed violence; but I'll carry 'em to the right owner. *[Tom kisses her]* Come, see me down stairs, *[To Tom]* and leave the lover to think of his last game for the prize. *[Exeunt Tom and Phillis.]*

Myr. I think I will instantly attempt this wild expedient. But I am so mortified at this conduct of mine towards poor Bevil: he must think meanly of me. I know not how to reassume myself, and be in spirit enough for such an adventure as this; yet I must attempt it, if it be only to be near Lucinda under her present perplexities; and sure —

The next delight to transport with the fair,
Is to relieve her in her hours of care.

[Exit.]

ACT THE FIFTH.



SCENE I. SEALAND'S House.

Enter PHILLIS, with Lights, before MYRTLE, disguised like SIR GEOFFRY CIMBERTON ; supported by MRS. SEALAND, LUCINDA, and CIMBERTON.

Mrs. S. Now I have seen you thus far, sir Geoffry, will you excuse me a moment while I give my necessary orders for your accommodation? *[Exit.]*

Myr. I have not seen you, cousin Cimberton, since you were ten years old ; and as it is incumbent on you to keep up your name and family, I shall upon very reasonable terms join with you in a settlement to that purpose, though I must tell you, cousin, this is the first merchant that has married into our house.

Luc. Deuce on 'em ! am I a merchant because my father is? *[Aside.]*

Myr. But is he directly a trader at this time?

Cim. There's no hiding the disgrace, sir ; he trades to all parts of the world.

Myr. We never had one of our family before who descended from persons that did any thing.

Cim. Sir, since it is a girl that they have, I am, for the honour of my family, willing to take it in again, and to sink her into our name, and no harm done.

Myr. 'Tis prudently and generously resolved.—Is this the young thing?

Cim. Yes, sir.

Phil. Good madam! don't be out of humour, but let them run to the utmost of their extravagance—
Hear them out. *[Apart to Lucinda.*

Myr. Can't I see her nearer? my eyes are but weak.

Phil. Beside, I am sure the uncle has something worth your notice. I'll take care to get off the young one, and leave you to observe what may be wrought out of the old one for your good. *[Apart, and exit.*

Cim. Madam, this old gentleman, your great uncle, desires to be introduced to you, and to see you nearer—Approach, sir.

Myr. By your leave, young lady—*[Puts on Spectacles]*—Cousin Cimberton, she has exactly that sort of neck and bosom for which my sister Gertrude was so much admired in the year sixty-one, before the French dresses first discovered any thing in women below the chin.

Luc. Chin, quotha! I don't believe my passionate lover there knows whether I have one or not. Ha, ha!

Cim. Madam, I would not willingly offend; but I have a better glass— *[Pulls out a large Glass.*

Re-enter PHILLIS.

Phil. Sir, my lady desires to show the apartment to you that she intends for sir Geoffrey. *[To Cimberton.*

Cim. Well, sir, by that time you have sufficiently gazed and sunned yourself in the beauties of my spouse there, I will wait on you again.

[Exit Cimberton and Phillis.

Myr. Were it not, madam, that I might be troublesome, there is something of importance, though we are alone, which I would say more safe from being heard.

Luc. There is something in this old fellow, methinks, that raises my curiosity. *[Aside.*

Myr. To be free, madam, I as heartily contemn this kinsman of mine as you do, and am sorry to see so much beauty and merit devoted by your parents to so insensible a possessor.

Luc. Surprising!—I hope then, sir, you will not contribute to the wrong you are so generous to pity, whatever may be the interest of your family.

Myr. This hand of mine shall never be employed to sign any thing against your good and happiness.

Luc. I am sorry, sir, it is not in my power to make you proper acknowledgments; but there is a gentleman in the world, whose gratitude will, I am sure, be worthy of the favour.

Myr. All the thanks I desire, madam, are in your power to give.

Luc. Name them, and command them.

Myr. Only, madam, that the first time you are alone with your lover, you will, with open arms, receive him.

Luc. As willingly as heart could wish it.

Myr. Thus then he claims your promise! Oh Lucinda!

Luc. Oh, a cheat, a cheat, a cheat!

Myr. Hush! 'tis I, 'tis I, your lover; Myrtle himself, madam.

Luc. Oh, bless me! what rashness and folly to surprise me so!—But hush—my mother—

Re-enter MRS. SEALAND, CIMBERTON, and PHILLIS.

Mrs. S. How now, what's the matter?

Luc. Oh, madam! as soon as you left the room, my uncle fell into a sudden fit, and—and—so I cried out for help to support him, and conduct him to his chamber.

Mrs. S. That was kindly done. Alas, sir, how do you find yourself?

Myr. Never was taken in so odd a way in my life—Pray lead me—Oh, I was talking here—Pray carry me—to my cousin Cimberton's young lady—

[*Cimberton and Lucinda lead him as one in Pain.*]

Cim. Plague, uncle, you will pull my ear off!

Luc. Pray, uncle; you will squeeze me to death!

Mrs. S. No matter, no matter; he knows not what he does. Come, sir, shall I help you out?

Myr. By no means; I'll trouble nobody but my young cousins here.

[*Exeunt. Cimberton and Lucinda leading Myrtle.*]

SCENE II. CHARING CROSS.

Enter SEALAND and HUMPHREY.

Seal. I am very glad, Mr. Humphrey, that you agree with me, that it is for our common good I should look thoroughly into this matter.

Hum. I am indeed of that opinion; for there is no artifice, nothing concealed in our family, which ought in justice to be known. I need not desire you, sir, to treat the lady with care and respect.

Seal. Master Humphrey, I shall not be rude, though I design to be a little abrupt, and come into the matter at once, to see how she will bear upon a surprise.

Hum. That's the door; sir, I wish you success.

[*Erit.*]

Seal. [*Knocks*] I'll carry this matter with an air of authority, to inquire, though I make an errand to begin discourse.

[*Knocks again.*]

Enter a Footboy.

So, young man, is your lady within?

Boy. Alack, sir, I am but a country boy; I don't know whether she is or noa; but, an' you'll stay a bit, I'll goa and ask the gentlewoman that's with her.

Seal. Why, sirrah, though you are a country boy, you can see, can't you? you know whether she is at home when you see her, don't you?

Boy. Nay, nay, I'm not such a country lad, neither, master, to think she is at home because I see her; I have been in town but a month, and I lost one place already for believing my own eyes.

Seal. Why, sirrah, have you learn'd to lie already?

Boy. Ah, master! things that are lies in the country are not lies at London; I begin to know my business a

little better than so; but, an' you please to walk in, I'll call a gentlewoman to you that can tell you for certain; she can make bold to ask my lady herself.

Seal. Oh then, she is within I find, though you dare not say so.

Boy. Nay, nay, that's neither here nor there; what's matter whether she is within or no, if she has not a mind to see any body?

Seal. I can't tell, sirrah, whether you are arch or simple; but, however, get me a direct answer, and here's a shilling for you.

Boy. Will you please to walk in? I'll see what I can do for you.

Seal. I see you will be fit for your business in time, child; but I expect to meet with nothing but extraordinary in such a house.

Boy. Such a house, sir! you ha'n't seen it yet. Pray walk in.

Seal. Sir, I'll wait upon you. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. INDIANA'S House.

Enter ISABELLA and Footboy.

Isa. So, Daniel, what news with you?

Boy. Madam, there's a gentleman below would speak with my lady.

Isa. Sirrah, don't you know Mr. Bevil yet?

Boy. Madam, 'tis not the gentleman who comes every day and asks for you, and won't go in till he knows whether you are with her or no.

Isa. Ha! that's a particular I did not know before. Well, be who it will, let him come up to me.

[*Exit Footboy.*]

Re-enter Footboy, with SEALAND. ISABELLA looks amazed.

Seal. Madam, I can't blame your being a little surprised to see a perfect stranger make a visit, and——

Isa. I am indeed surprised.—I see he does not know me. [*Aside.*]

Seal. You are very prettily lodg'd here, madam; in

troth, you seem to have every thing in plenty.—A thousand a year, I warrant you, upon this pretty nest of rooms, and the dainty one within them.

[*Aside, and looks about.*]

Isa. Twenty years, it seems, have less effect in the alteration of a man of thirty, than of a girl of fourteen—ho's almost still the same. How shall I contain my surprise and satisfaction?—He must not know me yet.

[*Aside.*]

Seal. Madam, I hope I don't give you any disturbance? but there is a young lady here with whom I have a particular business to discourse; and I hope she will admit me to that favour.

Isa. Why, sir, have you had any notice concerning her? I wonder who could give it you.

Seal. That, madam, is fit only to be communicated to herself.

Isa. Well, sir, you shall see her; you shall see her presently, sir; for now I am as a mother, and will trust her with you.

[*Exit.*]

Seal. As a mother! right: that's the old phrase for one of those commode ladies, who lend out beauty for hire to young gentlemen that have pressing occasions. But here comes the precious lady herself: in troth, a very sightly woman!

Enter INDIANA.

Ind. I am told, sir, you have some affair that requires your speaking with me.

Seal. Yes, madam. There came to my hands a bill, drawn by Mr. Bevil, which is payable to-morrow; and he, in the intercourse of business, sent it to me, who have cash of his, and desired me to send a servant with it; but I have made bold to bring you the money myself.

Ind. Sir, was that necessary?

Seal. No, madam; but to be free with you, the same of your beauty, and the regard which Mr. Bevil is a little too well known to have for you, excited my curiosity.

Ind. Too well known to have for me! Your sober appearance, sir, which my friend described, made me expect no rudeness, or absurdity at least.—Who's there?—Sir, if you pay the money to a servant, 'twill be as well.

Seal. Pray, madam, be not offended; I came hither on an innocent, nay, a virtuous, design; and if you will have patience to hear me, it may be as useful to you, as you are in friendship with Mr. Bevil, as to my only daughter, whom I was this day disposing of.

Ind. You make me hope, sir, I have mistaken you: I am composed again. Be free; say on—what I am afraid to hear.

[*Aside.*

Seal. I fear'd indeed an unwarranted passion here; but I did not think it was in abuse of so worthy an object, so accomplished a lady, as your sense and mien bespeak: but the youth of our age care not what merit and virtue they bring to shame, so they gratify—

Ind. Sir, you are going into very great errors; but as you are pleased to say you see something in me that has changed at least the colour of your suspicions, so has your appearance altered mine, and made me earnestly attentive to what has any way concerned you to inquire into my affairs and character.

Seal. How sensibly, with what an air, she talks.

[*Aside.*

Ind. Good sir, be seated, and tell me tenderly—keep all your suspicions concerning me alive, that you may in a proper and prepared way acquaint me why the care of your daughter obliges a person of your seeming worth and fortune to be thus inquisitive about a wretched, helpless, friendless—[*Weeps*] But I beg your pardon; though I am an orphan, your child is not; and your concern for her, it seems, has brought you hither. I'll be composed: pray go on, sir.

Seal. How could Mr. Bevil be such a monster to injure such a woman?

Ind. No, sir, you wrong him; he has not injured me; my support is from his bounty.

Seal. Bounty! when gluttons give high prices for delicates, they are prodigious bountiful!

Ind. Still, still you will persist in that error; but my own fears tell me all. You are the gentleman, I suppose, for whose happy daughter he is designed a husband by his good father? and he has perhaps consented to the overture, and he is to be perhaps this night a bridegroom.

Seal. I own he was intended such; but, madam, on your account I am determin'd to defer my daughter's marriage till I am satisfied, from your own mouth, of what nature are the obligations you are under to him.

Ind. His actions, sir, his eyes, have only made me think he designed to make me the partner of his heart. The goodness and gentleness of his demeanour made me misinterpret all; 'twas my own hope, my own passion, that deluded me. He never made one amorous advance to me; his large heart and bestowing hand have only helped the miserable: nor know I why, but from his mere delight in virtue, that I have been his care, the object on which to indulge and please himself with pouring favours.

Seal. Madam, I know not why it is, but I, as well as you, am, methinks, afraid of entering into the matter I came about; but 'tis the same thing as if we had talked never so distinctly; he ne'er shall have a daughter of mine.

Ind. If you say this from what you think of me, you wrong yourself and him. Let not me, miserable though I may be, do injury to my benefactor: no, sir, my treatment ought rather to reconcile you to his virtues.—If to bestow, without a prospect of return; if to delight in supporting what might perhaps be thought an object of desire, with no other view than to be her guard against those who would not be so disinterested; if these actions, sir, can, in a careful parent's eye, commend him to a daughter, give yours, sir; give her to my honest, generous Bevil!—What have I to do but sigh and weep, to rave, run wild, a lunatic in chains,

or, hid in darkness, mutter in distracted starts and broken accents my strange, strange story!

Seal. Take comfort, madam.

Ind. All my comfort must be to expostulate in madness, to relieve with frenzy my despair, and shrieking to demand of fate why, why was I born to such a variety of sorrows?

Seal. If I have been the least occasion——

Ind. No, 'twas heaven's high will I should be such—to be plundered in my cradle, tossed on the seas, and even there, an infant captive, to lose my mother, hear but of my father, to be adopted, lose my adopter, then plunged again in worse calamities!

Seal. An infant captive!

Ind. Yet then to find the most charming of mankind once more to set me free from what I thought the last distress; to load me with his services, his bounties, and his favours; to support my very life in a way that stole at the same time my very soul itself from me.

Seal. And has young Bevil been this worthy man?

Ind. Yet then again, this very man to take another, without leaving me the right, the pretence, of easing my fond heart with tears! for, oh! I can't reproach him, though the same hand that raised me to this height now throws me down the precipice.

Seal. Dear lady! oh yet one moment's patience; my heart grows full with your affliction! but yet there's something in your story that promises relief when you least hope it.

Ind. My portion here is bitterness and sorrow.

Seal. Do not think so. Pray answer me; does Bevil know your name and family?

Ind. Alas, too well! Oh! could I be any other thing than what I am!—I'll tear away all traces of my former self, my little ornaments, the remains of my first state, the hints of what I ought to have been.

[*In her Disorder she throws away her Bracelet, which Sealand takes up, and looks earnestly at it.*]

Seal. Ha! what's this? my eyes are not deceiv'd! It

is, it is the same; the very bracelet which I bequeathed my wife at our last mournful parting.

Ind. What said you, sir? your wife! Whither does my fancy carry me? what means this new-felt motion at my heart? And yet again my fortune but deludes me; for if I err not, sir, your name is Sealand; but my lost father's name was—

Seal. Danvers, was it not?

Ind. What new amazement! that is indeed my family.

Seal. Know then, when my misfortunes drove me to the Indies, for reasons too tedious now to mention, I changed my name of Danvers into Sealand.

Re-enter ISABELLA.

Isa. If yet there wants an explanation of your wonder, examine well this face; yours, sir, I well remember. Gaze on, and read in me your sister Isabella.

Seal. My sister!

Isa. But here's a claim more tender yet—your Indiana, sir, your long-lost daughter.

Seal. Oh, my child, my child!

Ind. All-gracious heaven! is it possible? do I embrace my father?

Seal. And do I hold thee?—These passions are too strong for utterance. Rise, rise, my child, and give my tears their way.—Oh, my sister! [*Embraces Isa.*]

Isa. Now, dearest niece, if I have wronged thy noble lover, with too hard aspicions, my just concern for thee, I hope, will plead my pardon.

Seal. Oh! make him then the full amends, and be yourself the messenger of joy: fly this instant: tell him all these wondrous turns of Providence in his favour; tell him I have now a daughter to bestow which he no longer will decline; that this day he still shall be a bridegroom; nor shall a fortune, the merit which his father seeks, be wanting. Tell him the reward of all his virtues waits on his acceptance. [*Exit Isabella*] My dearest Indiana! [*Turns and embraces her.*]

Ind. Have I then at last a father's sanction on my

love? his bounteous hand to give, and make my heart a present worthy of Bevil's generosity?

Seal. Oh, my child! how are our sorrows past o'er-paid by such a meeting! Though I have lost so many years of soft, paternal dalliance with thee, yet in one day to find thee thus, and thus bestow thee in such perfect happiness, is ample, ample reparation! and yet again the merit of thy lover——

Ind. Oh, had I spirits left to tell you of his actions, the pride, the joy of his alliance, sir, would warm your heart, as he has conquered mine.

Seal. How laudable is love when born of virtue! I burn to embrace him.

Ind. See, sir, my aunt already has succeeded, and brought him to your wishes.

Re-enter ISABELLA, with SIR JOHN BEVIL, BEVIL, MRS. SEALAND, CIMBERTON, MYRTLE, and LUCINDA.

Sir J. Where, where's this scene of wonder?—Mr. Sealand, I congratulate, on this occasion, our mutual happiness. Your good sister, sir, has, with the story of your daughter's fortune, filled us with surprise and joy. Now all exceptions are removed; my son has now avowed his love, and turned all former jealousies and doubts to approbation, and I am told your goodness has consented to reward him.

Seal. If, sir, a fortune equal to his father's hopes can make this object worthy his acceptance.

Bevil. I hear your mention, sir, of fortune with pleasure only, as it may prove the means to reconcile the best of fathers to my love: let him be provident, but let me be happy.—My ever destined, my acknowledged wife! [*Embraces Indiana.*]

Ind. Wife!—oh! my ever loved, my lord, my master!

Sir J. I congratulate myself as well as you that I have a son who could under such disadvantages discover your great merit.

Seal. Oh, sir John, how vain, how weak, is human prudence! what care, what foresight, what imagination,

could contrive such blest events to make our children happy, as Providence in one short hour has laid before us?

Cim. I am afraid, madam, Mr. Sealand is a little too busy for our affair; if you please, we'll take another opportunity. *[To Mrs. Sealand.]*

Mrs. S. Let us have patience, sir.

Cim. But we make sir Geoffry wait, madam.

Myr. Oh, sir, I'm not in haste.

[During this Bevil presents Lucinda to Indians.]

Seal. But here, here's our general benefactor. Excellent young man! that could be at once a lover to her beauty, and a parent to her virtue!

Bevil. If you think that an obligation, sir, give me leave to overpay myself in the only instance that can now add to my felicity, by begging you to bestow this lady on Mr. Myrtle.

Seal. She is his, without reserve. I beg he may be sent for.—Mr. Cimberton, notwithstanding you never had my consent, yet there is, since I saw you, another objection to your marriage with my daughter.

Cim. I hope, sir, your lady has concealed nothing from me?

Seal. Troth, sir, nothing but what was concealed from myself; another daughter, who has an undoubted title to half my estate.

Cim. How, Mr. Sealand? why then, if half Mrs. Lucinda's fortune is gone, you can't say that any of my estate is settled upon her; I was in treaty for the whole: but if that's not to be come at, to be sure there can be no bargain. Sir, I have nothing to do but to take my leave of your good lady, my cousin, and beg pardon for the trouble I have given this old gentleman.

Myr. That you have, Mr. Cimberton, with all my heart. *[Discovers himself.]*

Omes. Mr. Myrtle!

Myr. And I beg pardon of the whole company that I assumed the person of sir Geoffry only to be present at the danger of this lady's being disposed of, and in her utmost exigence to assert my right to her, which if

her parents will ratify, as they once favoured my pretensions, no abatement of fortune shall lessen her value to me.

Luc. Generous man!

Seal. If, sir, you can overlook the injury of being in treaty with one who has meanly left her, as you have generously asserted your right in her, she is yours.

Luc. Mr. Myrtle, though you have ever had my heart, yet now I find I love you more, because I deserve you less.

Mrs. S. Well, however, I'm glad the girl's disposed of any way.

[*Aside.*

Bevil. Myrtle, no longer rivals now, but brothers.

Myr. Dear Bevil! you are born to triumph over me, but now our competition ceases. I rejoice in the pre-eminence of your virtue, and your alliance adds charms to Lucinda.

Sir J. Now, ladies and gentlemen, you have set the world a fair example; your happiness is owing to your constancy and merit, and the several difficulties you have struggled with evidently show—

Whate'er the gen'rous mind itself denies,

The secret care of Providence supplies. [Exit.

EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. WELSTED.

INTENDED TO BE SPOKEN BY INDIANA.

Our author, whom entreaties cannot move,
Spite of the dear coquetry that you love,
Swears he'll not frustrate, so he plainly means,
By a loose epilogue his decent scenes.
Is it not, sirs, hard fate I meet to-day
To keep me rigid still beyond the play?
And yet I'm sav'd a world of pains that way:
I now can look, I now can move, at ease,
Nor need I torture these poor limbs to please,
Nor with the hand or foot attempt surprise,
Nor wrest my features, nor fatigue my eyes.
Bless me! what freakish gambols have I play'd,
What motions try'd, and wanton looks betray'd,
Out of pure kindness all! to overrule
The threaten'd hiss, and screen some scribbling fool.
With more respect I'm entertain'd to-night;
Our author thinks I can with ease delight:
My artless looks while modest graces arm,
He says, I need but to appear and charm.
A wife so form'd, by these examples bred,
Pours joy and gladness round the marriage-bed
Soft source of comfort, kind relief from care,
And 'tis her least perfection to be fair.
The nymph with Indiana's worth who vies,
A nation will behold with Bevil's eyes.

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THE
CITIZEN.

A Farce.

BY ARTHUR MURPHY, ESQ.

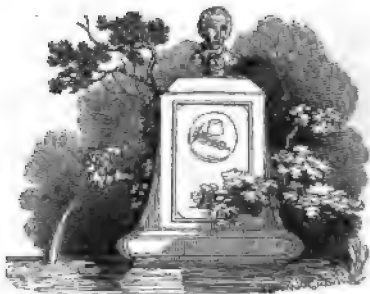
CORRECTLY GIVEN, FROM COPIES USED IN THE THEATRES,

BY

THOMAS DIBDIN,

OF THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.

Author of several Dramatic Pieces.

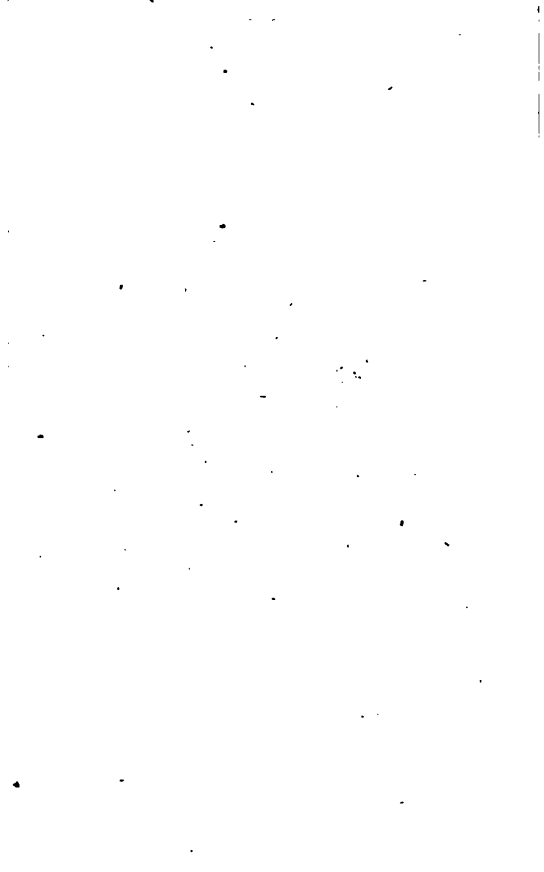


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ROW, LONDON.**

1815.



THE CITIZEN

WAS originally brought out as a comedy, in three acts, at Drury Lane in the year 1761, when that theatre was under the management of Mr. Foote; where Miss Elliot, a young actress of extraordinary talents, made her *debut* in the character of *Maria*, and succeeded in her attempt much better than did the piece; which was not a favourite until reduced to a farce. Mr. Murphy is said to have borrowed his principal character from the French; but as he never disavowed his obligations to the Gallic stage, and always very much improved his originals in the translation, we do not imagine that so well-written a piece as the CITIZEN will be less valued on such an assumption.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted at Drury Lane, in 1761.

<i>Philpot</i>	Mr. Shuter.
<i>Young Philpot</i>	Mr. Woodward.
<i>Sir Jasper Wilding</i>	Mr. Dunstall.
<i>Young Wilding</i>	Mr. Dyer.
<i>Beaufort</i>	Mr. Baker.
<i>Dapper</i>	Mr. Costollo.
<i>Quilldrive</i>	Mr. Perry.
 <i>Maria</i>	 Miss Elliot.
<i>Corinna</i>	Miss Cockayne.

— / —
Drury Lane, 1815.

Covent Garden, 1806.

<i>Philpot</i>	Mr. Munden.	Mr. Munden.
<i>Young Philpot</i> . . .	Mr. Bannister.	Mr. Melven.
<i>Sir Jasper Wilding</i>	Mr. Carr.	Mr. Davenport.
<i>Young Wilding</i> . .	Mr. Decamp.	Mr. Brunton.
<i>Beaufort</i>	Mr. Fisher.	Mr. Claremont.
<i>Dapper</i>	Mr. Maddocks.	Mr. Simmons.
<i>Quilldrive</i>	Mr. Evans.	Mr. Klanert.
 <i>Maria</i>	 Mrs. Davison.	 Mrs. C. Kemble.
<i>Corinna</i>	Mrs. Scott.	Mrs. Humphries.

Servants, &c. &c.

ACT THE FIRST.



SCENE I.

Enter Young WILDING and BEAUFORT, followed by WILL.

Young W. HA, ha! my dear Beaufort! a fiery young fellow like you, melted down into a sighing, love-sick dangler after a well-turn'd ancle, and a short petticoat!

Beau. Pr'ythee, Wilding, don't laugh at me—Maria's charms—

Young W. Maria's charms! And so now you would fain grow wanton in her praise, and have me listen to your raptures about my own sister! ha, ha, poor Beaufort! —Is my sister at home, Will?

Will. She is, sir.

Young W. How long has my father been gone out?

Will. This hour, sir.

Young W. Very well. Pray give Mr. Beaufort's compliments to my sister, and he is come to wait upon her. [*Exit Will*] You will be glad to see her, I suppose, Charles?

Beau. I live but in her presence.

Young W. Live but in her presence! How the devil could the young baggage raise this riot in your heart? 'tis more than her brother could ever do with any of her sex.

Beau. Nay, you have no reason to complain; you are come up to town post-haste to marry a wealthy citizen's daughter, who only saw you last season at Ten-bridge, and has been languishing for you ever since.

Young W. That's more than I do for her; and to tell you the truth, more than I believe she does for me.—This is a match of prudence, man; bargain and sale!—My reverend dad and the old put of a citizen finished the business at Lloyd's coffee-house by inch of candle—a mere transferring of property!—"Give your son to my daughter, and I will give my daughter to your son." That's the whole affair; and so I am just arrived to consummate the nuptials.

Beau. Thou art the happiest fellow—

Young W. Happy! so I am—what should I be otherwise for? If miss Sally—upon my soul I forget her name—

Beau. Well, that is so like you!—Miss Sally Philpot—

Young W. Ay, very true—miss Sally Philpot—she will bring fortune sufficient to pay off an old encumbrance upon the family estate, and my father is to settle handsomely upon me—and so I have reason to be contented, have not I?

Beau. Pho! this is all idle talk; and in the mean time I am ruin'd.

Young W. How so?

Beau. Why you know the old couple have bargain'd your sister away.

Young W. Bargain'd her away! and will you pretend you are in love?—Can you look tamely on, and see her barter'd away at Garraway's like logwood, cochineal, or indigo?—Marry her privately, man, and keep it a secret till my affair is over.

Beau. My dear Wilding, will you propose it to her?

Young W. With all my heart—She is very long a coming—I'll tell you what, if she has a fancy for you, carry her off at once—but perhaps she has a mind to this cub of a citizen, miss Sally's brother.

Beau. Oh, no! he's her aversion.

Young W. I have never seen any of the family, but my wife that is to be. What sort of a fellow is the son?

Beau. Oh! a diamond of the first water; a buck, sir, a blood! every night at this end of the town; at twelve next day he sneaks about the Change in a little bit of a frock and bob-wig, and looks like a sedate book-keeper in the eyes of all who behold him.

Young W. Upon my word, a gentleman of spirit.

Beau. Spirit!—he drives a phaeton two story high, keeps his girl at this end of the town, and is the gay George Philpot all round Covent-garden.

Young W. Oh, brave!—and the father——

Beau. The father, sir——But here comes Maria; take his picture from her. [*Maria sings within.*]

Young W. Hey! she is musical this morning; she holds her usual spirits, I find.

Beau. Yes, yes, the spirit of eighteen, with the idea of a lover in her head——

Young W. Ay, and such a lover as you too! though still in her teens, she can play upon all your foibles, and treat you as she does her monkey, tickle you, torment you, enrage you, sooth you, exalt you, depress you, pity you, laugh at you—ecce signum!

Enter MARIA, singing.

The same giddy girl!——Sister, come, my dear——

Maria. Have done, brother; let me have my own way——I will go through my song.

Young W. I have not seen you this age; ask me how I do.

Maria. I won't ask you how you do—I won't take any notice of you—I don't know you.

Young W. Do you not know this gentleman then? Will you speak to him?

Maria. No, I won't speak to him; I'll sing to him; it's my humour to sing. [*Sings.*]

Young W. Have you seen your city lover yet?

Maria. No, but I long to see him; I fancy he is a curiosity.

Beau. Long to see him, Maria?

Maria. Yes, long to see him. [*Beaufort fiddles with his Lip, and looks thoughtful*] Brother, brother! [*Goes to Young Wilding softly, and beckons him to look at*

Beaufort] do you see that? [*Mimics him*] Mind him, ha, ha!

Beau. Make me ridiculous, if you will, Maria; so you don't make me unhappy by marrying this citizen.

Maria. And would not you have me marry, sir?—What, I must lead a single life to please you, must I?—Upon my word, you are a pretty gentleman to make laws for me. [*Sings.*

Can it be or by law or by equity said,

That a comely young girl ought to die an old maid?

Young W. Come, come, miss Pert, compose yourself a little—this will never do.

Maria. My cross, ill-natured brother! but it will do. Lord, what do you both call me hither to plague me? I won't stay among ye—à l'honneur, à l'honneur—[*Running away*—à l'honneur.

Young W. Hey, hey, miss Notable! come back; pray, madam, come back. [*Forces her back.*

Maria. Lord of heaven! what do you want?

Young W. Come, come, truce with your frolic, miss Hoyden, and behave like a sensible girl; we have serious business with you.

Maria. Have you? Well, come, I will be sensible—there, I blow all my folly away—'tis gone, 'tis gone, and now I'll talk sense: come—is that a sensible face?

Young W. Pho, pho, be quiet, and hear what we have to say to you.

Maria. I will; I am quiet. It is charming weather; it will be good for the country, this will.

Young W. Pho, ridiculous! how can you be so silly?

Maria. Bless me! I never saw any thing like you—there is no such thing as satisfying you—I am sure it was very good sense what I said—papa talks in that manner—Well, well! I'll be silent then—I won't speak at all—will that satisfy you? [*Looks sullen.*

Young W. Come, come, no more of this folly, but mind what is said to you—you have not seen your city lover, you say? [*Maria shrugs her Shoulders, and shakes her Head.* Why don't you answer?

Beau. My dear Maria, put me out of pain.

[*Maria shrugs her Shoulders again.*

Young W. Pho! don't be so childish, but give a rational answer.

Maria. Why, no, then; no—no, no, no, no—I tell you no, no, no—

Young W. Come, come, my little giddy sister, you must not be so flighty; behave sedately, and don't be a girl always.

Maria. Why, don't I tell you I have not seen him?—but I am to see him this very day.

Beau. To see him this day, Maria?

Maria. Ha, ha!—look there, brother; he is beginning again—But don't fright yourself, and I'll tell you all about it—My papa comes to me this morning—by-the-by, he makes a fright of himself with his strange dress—Why does he not dress as other gentlemen do, brother?

Young W. He dresses like his brother fox-hunters in Wiltshire.

Maria. But when he comes to town, I wish he would do as other gentlemen do here—I am almost ashamed of him—But he comes to me this morning—"Hoio! hoio! our Moll—Where's the sly puss?—Tally ho!"—"Did you want me, papa?"—"Come hither, Moll, I'll gee you a husband, my girl; one that has mettle enow——"

Beau. There now, Wilding, did not I tell you this?

Young W. Where are you to see the young citizen?

Maria. Why, papa will be at home in an hour, and then he intends to drag me into the city with him, and there the sweet creature is to be introduced to me. The old gentleman, his father, is delighted with me; but I hate him, an old ugly thing.

Young W. Give us a description of him; I want to know him.

Maria. Why he looks like the picture of avarice sitting with pleasure upon a bag of money, and trembling for fear any body should come and take it away; he has got square-toed shoes, and little tiny buckles; a brown coat, with small round brass buttons, that looks as if it was new in my great grandmother's time; and his face all shrivell'd and pinch'd

with care; and he shakes his head like a mandarin upon a chimney piece.—“Ay, ay, sir Jasper, you are right;” and then he grins at me. “I protest she is a very pretty bale of goods. Ay, ay, and my son Bob is a very sensible lad—ay, ay, and I will underwrite their happiness at one and a half per cent.

Young W. Thank you, my dear girl; thank you for this account of my relations.

Beau. Destruction to my hopes! Surely, my dear little angel, if you have any regard for me——

Maria. There, there, there, he's frightened again.

[*Sings, Dearest creature, &c.*]

Young W. Pshaw! give over these airs—listen to me, and I'll instruct you how to manage them all.

Maria. Oh! my dear brother, you are very good—but don't mistake yourself; though just come from a boarding-school, give me leave to manage for myself. There is in this case a man I like, and a man I don't like—It is not you I like [*To Beauport*]*—No—no—I hate you—but let this little head alone; I know what to do—I shall know how to prefer one, and get rid of the other.*

Beau. What will you do, Maria?

Maria. Ha, ha! I can't help laughing at you. [*Sings.*

Do not grieve me,

Oh! relieve, &c.

Young W. Come, come, be serious, miss Port, and I'll instruct you what to do—The old cit, you say, admires you for your understanding, and his son would not marry you unless he found you a girl of sense and spirit?

Maria. Even so—this is the character of your giddy sister.

Young W. Why then, I'll tell you—you shall make him hate you for a fool, and so let the refusal come from himself.

Maria. But how—how, my dear brother? Tell me how?

Young W. Why you have seen a play with me, where a man pretends to be a downright country oaf, in order to rule a wife and have a wife.

Maria. Very well—what then? what then?—Oh—I have it—I understand you—say no more—'tis charming; I like it of all things; I'll do it, I will: and I will so plague him, that he shan't know what to make of me—the sour, the sweet, the bitter, he shall swallow all, and all shall work upon him alike for my diversion. Say nothing of it—it's all among ourselves; but I won't be cruel. I hate ill nature, and then who knows but I may like him?

Beau. My dear Maria, don't talk of liking him.

Maria. Oh! now you are beginning again.

[*Sings, Voi Amanti, &c. and exit.*]

Beau. 'Sdeath, Wilding, I shall never be your brother-in-law at this rate.

Young W. Pshaw, follow me; don't be apprehensive—I'll give her further instructions, and she will execute them I warrant you; the old fellow's daughter shall be mine, and the son may go shift for himself elsewhere.

SCENE II. PHILPOT'S House.

Enter PHILPOT, DAPPER, and QUILLDRIVE.

Phil. Quilldrive, have those dollars been sent to the Bank, as I order'd?

Quill. They have, sir.

Phil. Very well!—Mr. Dapper, I am not fond of writing any thing of late; but at your request—

Dap. You know I would not offer you a bad policy.

Phil. I believe it—Well, step with me to my closet, and I will look at your policy—How much do you want upon it?

Dap. Three thousand; you had better take the whole: there are very good names upon it.

Phil. Well, well, step with me, and I'll talk to you—Quilldrive, step with those bills for acceptance—This way, Mr. Dapper, this way. [*Exit with Dapper.*]

Quill. A miserly old rascal! digging, digging money out of the very hearts of mankind; constantly, constantly scraping together, and yet trembling with anxiety for fear of coming to want. A canting old hypocrite! and yet, under his veil of sanctity, he has a liquorish tooth left—running to the other end of the

town slily every evening, and there he has his solitary pleasures in holes and corners.

Young P. [*Peeping in*] Hist, hist!—Quilldrive!

Quill. Ha, master George!—

Young P. Is Square-toes at home?

Quill. He is.

Young P. Has he asked for me?

Quill. He has.

Enter Young PHILPOT on Tip-toe.

Young P. Does he know I did not lay at home?

Quill. No; I sunk that upon him.

Young P. Well done; I'll give you a choice gelding to carry you to Dulwich of a Sunday—Damnation!—up all night—stripped of nine hundred pounds—pretty well for one night!—Piqued, repiqued, flamm'd, and caputt'd every deal!—Old Dry-beard shall pay all—Is forty-seven good? no—fifty good? no!—no, no, no—to the end of the chapter—Cruel luck!—Damn me, it's life though—this is life—'Sdeath! I hear him coming [*Runs to the Side and Peeps*]—No, all's safe—I must not be caught in these clothes, Quilldrive.

Quill. How came it you did not leave them at madam Corinna's, as you generally do?

Young P. I was afraid of being too late for old Square-toes, and so I whipt into a hackney-coach, and drove with the windows up, as if I was afraid of a bumbailiff—Pretty clothes, an't they?

Quill. Ah! sir.

Young P. Reach me one of my mechanic city frocks—no—stay—it's in the next room, an't it?

Quill. Yes, sir.

Young P. I'll run and slip it on in a twink. [*Erit.*

Quill. Mercy on us! what a life does he lead. Old Cojer within here will scrape together for him, and the moment young master comes to possession, "I'll got ill gone," I warrant me; a hard card I have to play between 'em both—drudging for the old man, and pimping for the young one—The father is a reservoir of riches, and the son is a fountain to play it all away in vanity and folly!

Re-enter Young PHILPOT.

Young P. Now I'm equipped for the city—Damn the city—I wish the Papishes would set fire to it again—I hate to be beating the hoof here among them—Here comes father—no—It's Dapper—Quilldrive, I'll give you the gelding.

Quill. Thank you, sir.

[*Exit.*]

Re-enter DAPPER.

Dap. Why you look like a devil, George.

Young P. Yes, I have been up all night; lost all my money, and I am afraid I must smash for it.

Dap. Smash for it—what have I let you into the secret for? Have I not advised you to trade upon your own account—and you feel the sweets of it—how much do you owe in the city?

Young P. At least twenty thousand.

Dap. Pho, that's nothing! Bring it up to fifty or sixty thousand, and then give 'em a good crash at once—I have ensur'd the ship for you.

Young P. Have you?

Dap. The policy's full! I have just touch'd your father for the last three thousand.

Young P. Excellent! Are the goods re-landed?

Dap. Every bale—I have had them up to town, and sold them to a packer for you.

Young P. Bravo!—And the ship is loaded with rubbish, I suppose?

Dap. Yes; and is now proceeding the voyage.

Young P. Very well—And to-morrow or next day, we shall hear of her being lost upon the Goodwin, or sunk between the Needles?

Dap. Certainly.

Young P. Admirable! And then we shall come upon the underwriters.

Dap. Directly.

Young P. My dear Dapper! [*Embraces him.*]

Dap. Yes; I do a dozen every year. How do you think I can live as I do otherwise?

Young P. Very true. Shall you be at the club after 'Change?

Dap. Without fail.

Young P. That's right; it will be a full meeting: we shall have Nat Pigtail, the dry-salter, there; and Bob Reptile, the 'Change-broker; and Sobersides, the banker—we shall all be there. We shall have deep doings.

Dap. Yes, yes; well, a good morning; I must go now and fill up a policy for a ship that has been lost these three days.

Young P. My dear Dapper, thou art the best of friends.

Dap. Ay, I'll stand by you—It will be time enough for you to break, when you see your father near his end: then give 'em a smash, put yourself at the head of his fortune, and begin the world again—Good morning. [Exit.

Young P. Dapper, adieu—Who now in my situation would envy any of your great folks at the court-end? A lord has nothing to depend upon but his estate—He can't spend you a hundred thousand pounds of other people's money—no—no—I had rather be a little bob-wig citizen, in good credit, than a commissioner of the customs—Commissioner!—the king has not so good a thing in his gift as a commission of bankruptcy—Don't we see them all with their country seats at Hogsdon, and at Kentish-town, and at Newington-butts, and at Islington; with their little flying Mercurys tipt upon the top of the house, their Apollos, their Venus's, and their leaden Hercules's in the garden; and themselves sitting before the door, with pipes in their mouths, waiting for a good digestion?—Zounds! here comes old dad; now for a few dry maxims of left-handed wisdom, to prove myself a scoundrel in sentiments, and pass in his eyes for a hopeful young man likely to do well in the world.

Re-enter PHILPOT.

Phil. Twelve times twelve is a hundred and forty-four.

Young P. I'll attack him in his own way—Commission at two and a half per cent.

Phil. There he is, intent upon business! [Aside]—What, plodding, George?

Young P. Thinking a little of the main chance, sir.

Phil. That's right; it is a wide world, George.

Young P. Yes, sir, but you instructed me early in the rudiments of trade.

Phil. Ay, ay! I instill'd good principles into thee.

Young P. So you did, sir—Principal and interest is all I ever heard from him. [*Aside*]—I shall never forget the story you recommended to my earliest notice, sir.

Phil. What was that, George? It is quite out of my head.

Young P. It intimated, sir, how Mr. Thomas Inkle, of London, merchant, was cast away, and was afterwards protected by a young lady, who grew in love with him; and how he afterwards bargained with a planter to sell her for a slave.

Phil. Ay, ay, [*Laughs*] I recollect it now.

Young P. And when she pleaded being with child by him, he was no otherwise moved than to raise his price, and make her turn to better account.

Phil. [*Bursts into a Laugh*] I remember it—ha, ha! there was the very spirit of trade! ay, ay—ha, ha!

Young P. That was calculation for you.

Phil. Ay, ay.

Young P. The rule of three—if one gives me so much, what will two give me?

Phil. Ay, ay. [*Laughs.*]

Young P. Rome was not built in a day—Fortunes are made by degrees—Pains to get, care to keep, and fear to lose.

Phil. Ay, ay, the good boy—

Young P. The old curmudgeon. [*Aside.*]

Phil. The good boy! George, I have great hopes of thee.

Young P. Thanks to your example; you have taught me to be cautious in this wide world—Love your neighbour, but don't pull down your hedge.

Phil. I profess it is a wise saying—I never heard it before; it is a wise saying, and shows how cautious we should be of too much confidence in friendship.

Young P. Very true.

Phil. Friendship has nothing to do with trade.

Young P. It only draws a man in to lend money.

Phil. Ay, ay.

Young P. There was your neighbour's son, Dick Worthy, who was always cramming his head with Greek and Latin at school; he wanted to borrow of me the other day, but I was too cunning.

Phil. Ay, ay—Let him draw bills of exchange in Greek and Latin, and see where he will get a pound sterling for them.

Young P. So I told him—I went to him to his garret, in the Minories; and there I found him in all his misery; and a fine scene it was—There was his wife in a corner of the room, at a washing-tub, up to the elbows in suds; a solitary pork-steak was dangling by a bit of pack-thread, before a melancholy fire; himself seated at a three-legg'd table, writing a pamphlet against the German war; a child upon his left knee, his right leg employed in rocking a cradle with a bratling in it—And so there was business enough for them all—His wife rubbing away, [*Mimics a Washer-woman*] and he writing on, "The king of Prussia shall have no more subsidies; Saxony shall be indemnified—He shan't have a foot in Silesia.—There is a sweet little baby!" [*To the Child on his Knee*] Then he rock'd the cradle, "Hush, ho! hush, ho!"—Then he twisted the griskin. [*Snaps his Fingers*]—"Hush, ho!—The Russians shall have Prussia."—[*Writes*]—The wife, [*Washes and sings*] he—"There's a dear."—Round goes the griskin again. [*Snaps his Fingers*] "And Canada must be restored." [*Writes*]—And so you have a picture of the whole family.

Phil. Ha, ha! What becomes of his Greek and Latin now? Fine words butter no parsnips—He had no money from you, I suppose, George?

Young P. Oh, no! charity begins at home, says I.

Phil. And it was wisely said—I have an excellent saying when any man wants to borrow of me—I am ready with my joke—A fool and his money are soon parted—ha, ha, ha!

Young P. Ha, ha—An old skin-flint. [Aside.]

Phil. Ay, ay—A fool and his money are soon parted—ha, ha, ha!

Young P. Now if I can wring a handsome sum out of him, it will prove the truth of what he says. [Aside]—And yet trade has its inconveniences—Great houses stopping payment!

Phil. Hey—what! you look chagrin'd!—Nothing of that sort has happen'd to thee, I hope?

Young P. A great house at Cadiz—Don John de Alvarada—The Spanish galleons not making quick returns—And so my bills are come back.

Phil. Ay! [Shakes his Head.]

Young P. I have indeed a remittance from Messina. That voyage yields me thirty per cent. profit—But this blow coming upon me—

Phil. Why this is unlucky. How much money?

Young P. Three and twenty hundred.

Phil. George, too many eggs in one basket. I'll tell thee, George, I expect sir Jasper Wilding here presently to conclude the treaty of marriage I have on foot for thee: then hush this up, say nothing of it, and in a day or two you may pay these bills with his daughter's portion.

Young P. The old rogue. [Aside]—That will never do, I shall be blown upon 'Change—Alvarada will pay in time—He has open'd his affairs—He appears a good man.

Phil. Does he?

Young P. A great fortune left. Will pay in time. But I must crack before that.

Phil. It is unlucky! A good man you say he is?

Young P. Nobody better.

Phil. Let me see—Suppose I lend this money.

Young P. Ah, sir.

Phil. How much is your remittance from Messina?

Young P. Seven hundred and fifty.

Phil. Then you want fifteen hundred and fifty.

Young P. Exactly.

Phil. Don Alvarada is a good man you say?

Young P. Yes, sir.

Phil. I will venture to lend the money—You must allow me commission upon those bills, for taking them up for the honour of the drawer.

Young P. Agreed.

Phil. Lawful interest while I am out of my money.

Young P. I subscribe.

Phil. A power of attorney to receive the monies from Alvarada, when he makes a payment.

Young P. You shall have it.

Phil. Your own bond.

Young P. To be sure.

Phil. Go and get me a check—You shall have a draught on the Bank.

Young P. Yes, sir.

[Going.]

Phil. But stay—I had forgot—I must sell out for this—Stocks are under par—You must pay the difference.

Young P. Was ever such a leech! [Aside]—By all means, sir.

Phil. Stop and get me a check.

Young P. A fool and his money are soon parted.

[Aside and exit.]

Phil. What with commission, lawful interest, and his paying the difference of the stocks, which are higher now than when I bought in, this will be no bad morning's work; and then in the evening I shall be in the rarest spirits for this new adventure I am recommended to—Let me see, what is the lady's name? [Takes a Letter out] Corinna! ay, ay, by the description she is a bale of goods.

Re-enter QUILLDRIVE.

Quill. Sir Jasper Wilding, sir, and his daughter.

Phil. I am at home.

Enter SIR JASPER WILDING, singing, dressed as a Fox-hunter, and MARIA.

Sir Jasper, your very humble servant.

Sir J. Master Philpot, I be glad to see ye, I am indeed.

Phil. The like compliment to you, sir Jasper—Miss Maria, I kiss your fair hand.

Maria. Sir, your most obedient.

Sir J. Ay, ay, I ha' brought un to zee you—There's my girl—I ben't ashamed of my girl.

Maria. That's more than I can say of my father.*

Phil. Truly she is a blooming young lady, sir Jasper; and I verily shall like to take an interest in her.

Sir J. I ha' brought her to zee ye; and so your zon may ha' her as soon as he will.

Phil. Why she looks three and a half per cent. better than when I saw her last.

Maria. Then there is hopes that in a little time I shall be above par. He rates me like a lottery ticket.

Phil. Ay, ay, I doubt not, sir Jasper. Miss has the appearance of a very sensible, discreet young lady; and, to deal freely, without that she would not do for my son. George is a shrewd lad, and I have often heard him declare, no consideration should ever prevail on him to marry a fool.

Maria. Ay, you have told me so before, old gentleman, and I have my cue from my brother; and if I don't soon give master George a surfeit of me, why then I am not a notable girl.

Re-enter Young PHILPOT.

Young P. A good clever old cuff this—after my own heart—I think I'll have his daughter, if it's only for the pleasure of hunting with him.

Sir J. Zon-in-law, gee us your hand—What zay you? are you ready for my girl?

Young P. Say grace as soon as you will, sir, and I'll fall to.

Sir J. Well zaid—I like you—I like un, master Philpot—I like un—I'll tell you what, let un talk to her now.

Phil. And so he shall. George, she is a bale of goods; speak her fair now, and then you'll be in oash.

Young P. I think I had rather not speak to her

now—I hate speaking to those modest women—Sir—Sir—a word in your ear—had not I better break my mind, by advertising for her in a newspaper?

Phil. Talk sense to her, George; she is a notable girl—and I'll give the draft upon the Bank presently.

Sir J. Come along, master Philpot, come along—I ben't afraid of my girl—come along.

[Exit with Philpot.]

Maria. A pretty sort of a lover they have found for me.

[Aside.]

Young P. How should I speak my mind to her? She is almost a stranger to me.

[Aside.]

Maria. Now I'll make the hideous thing hate me if I can.

[Aside.]

Young P. Ay, she is as sharp as a needle, I warrant her.

[Aside.]

Maria. When will he begin?—Ah, you fright! you rival Mr. Beaufort! I'll give him an aversion to me, that's what I will; and so let him have the trouble of breaking off the match. Not a word yet—he is in a fine confusion. *[Aside. Looks foolish]* I think I may as well sit down, sir.

Young P. Ma'am—I—I—I—*[Frightened]* I'll hand you a chair, ma'am—there, ma'am. *[Bows awkwardly.]*

Maria. Sir, I thank you.

Young P. I'll sit down too.

[In confusion.]

Maria. Heigho!

Young P. Ma'am!

Maria. Sir!

Young P. I thought—I—I—I—did you say something, ma'am?

Maria. No, sir; nothing.

Young P. I beg your pardon, ma'am.

Maria. Oh! you are a sweet creature. *[Aside.]*

Young P. The ice is broke now, I have begun, and so I'll go on.

[Sits silent, looks foolish, and steals a look at her.]

Maria. An agreeable interview this! *[Aside.]*

Young P. Pray, ma'am, do you ever go to concerts?

Maria. Concerts!—what's that, sir?

Young P. A music meeting.

Maria. I have been at a Quaker's meeting; but never at a music meeting.

Young P. Lord, ma'am, all the gay world goes to concerts. She notable! I'll take courage, she is nobody. [*Aside*].—Will you give me leave to present you with a ticket for the Crown and Anchor, ma'am?

Maria. [*Looking simple and awkward*]. A ticket—what's a ticket?

Young P. There, ma'am, at your service.

Maria. [*Courtesies awkwardly*] I long to see what a ticket is.

Young P. What a courtesy there is for the St. James's end of the town. I hate her; she seems to be an idiot.

[*Aside.*

Maria. Here's a charming ticket he has given me. [*Aside*].—And is this a ticket, sir?

Young P. Yes, ma'am. And is this a ticket?

[*Mimics her aside.*

Maria. [*Reads*] For sale by the candle, the following goods—Thirty chests, straw hats—Fifty tubs, chip hats—Pepper, sago, borax—ha, ha! such a ticket!

Young P. I—I—I have made a mistake, ma'am—here, here is the right one.

Maria. You need not mind it, sir—I never go to such places.

Young P. No, ma'am. I don't know what to make of her. [*Aside*].—Was you ever at the White Conduit-house?

Maria. There's a question! [*Aside*] Is that a nobleman's seat?

Young P. [*Laughs*] Simpleton! [*Aside*].—No, miss, it is not a nobleman's seat—Lord! it's at Islington.

Maria. Lord Islington!—I don't know my lord Islington.

Young P. The town of Islington.

Maria. I have not the honour of knowing his lordship.

Young P. Islington is a town, ma'am.

Maria. Oh! it's a town?

Young P. Yes, ma'am.

Maria. I am glad of it.

Young P. What is she glad of? [*Aside.*]

Maria. A pretty husband my papa has chose for me!

Young P. What shall I say to her next?—Have

you been at the burletta, ma'am?

Maria. Where?

Young P. The burletta.

Maria. Sir, I would have you to know that I am no such person—I go to burlettas! I am not what you take me for, sir.

Young P. Ma'am!

Maria. I'm come of good people, sir; and have been properly educated, as a young girl ought to be.

Young P. What a damn'd fool she is! [*Aside*] The burletta is an opera, ma'am.

Maria. Opera, sir! I don't know what you mean by this usage—to affront me in this manner—

Young P. Affront! I mean quite the reverse, ma'am; I took you for a connoisseur.

Maria. Who, me a connoisseur, sir? I desire you won't call me such names. I am sure I never so much as thought on such a thing. Sir, I won't be call'd a connoisseur—I won't—I won't—I won't.

[*Bursts into Tears.*]

Young P. Ma'am, I mean no offence—A connoisseur is a virtuoso.

Maria. Don't virtuoso me! I am no virtuoso, sir, I would have you to know it—I am as virtuous a girl as any in England; and I will never be a virtuoso.

[*Cries bitterly.*]

Young P. But, ma'am, you mistake me quite.

Maria. [*In a Passion, choking her Tears and sobbing*] Sir, I am come of as virtuous people as any in England—My family was always remarkable for virtue—my mamma [*Bursts out*] was as good a woman as ever was born, and my aunt Bridget [*Sobbing*] was a virtuous woman too—And there is my sister Sophy makes as good and as virtuous a wife as any at all—And so, sir, don't call me a virtuoso—I won't be brought here to be treated in this manner, I won't—I won't—I won't.

[*Cries bitterly.*]

Young P. The girl's a natural—So much the better. I'll marry her, and lock her up. [*Aside*] Ma'am, upon my word you misunderstand me.

Maria. Sir, [*Drying her Tears*] I won't be called connoisseur by you nor any body; and I am no virtuoso, I'd have you to know that.

Young P. Ma'am, connoisseur and virtuoso are words for a person of taste.

Maria. Taste!

[*Sobs.*]

Young P. Yes, ma'am.

Maria. And did you mean to say as how I am a person of taste?

Young P. Undoubtedly.

Maria. Sir, your most obedient humble servant! Oh, that's another thing—I have a taste to be sure—

Young P. I know you have, ma'am. Oh, you're a curs'd ninny. [*Aside.*]

Maria. Yes, I know I have—I can read tolerably, and I begin to write a little.

Young P. Upon my word, you have made great progress!—What could old Square-toes mean by passing her upon me for a sensible girl? And what a fool I was to be afraid to speak to her.—I'll talk to her openly at once. [*Aside*] Come, sit down, miss.—Pray, ma'am, are you inclined to matrimony?

Maria. Yes, sir.

Young P. Are you in love?

Maria. Yes, sir.

Young P. Those naturals are always amorous. [*Aside*] How should you like me?

Maria. Of all things.

Young P. A girl without ceremony. [*Aside*] Do you love me?

Maria. Yes, sir.

Young P. But don't you love any body else?

Maria. Yes, sir.

Young P. Frank and free. [*Aside*] But not so well as me?

Maria. Yes, sir.

Young P. Better, may be?

Maria. Yes, sir.

Young P. The devil you do! [*Aside*] And perhaps, if I should marry you, I should have a chance to be made a——

Maria. Yes, sir.

Young P. The case is clear.—Miss Maria, your very humble servant; you are not for my money, I promise you.

Maria. Sir!

Young P. I have done, ma'am, that's all; and I take my leave.

Maria. But you'll marry me?

Young P. No, ma'am, no—no such thing—You may provide yourself a husband elsewhere; I am your humble servant.

Maria. Not marry me, Mr. Philpot?—But you must—my papa said you must—and I will have you.

Young P. There's another proof of her nonsense.—[*Aside*] Make yourself easy, for I shall have nothing to do with you.

Maria. Not marry me, Mr. Philpot? [*Bursts into Tears*] But I say you shall—and I will have a husband, or I'll know the reason why—you shall—you shall—

Young P. A pretty sort of a wife they intend for me here.

Maria. I wonder you an't ashamed of yourself, to affront a young girl in this manner. I'll go and tell my papa—I will—I will—I will. [*Cries bitterly.*]

Young P. And so you may—I have no more to say to you—and so your servant, miss—your servant.

Maria. Ay, and by goles! my brother Bob shall fight you.

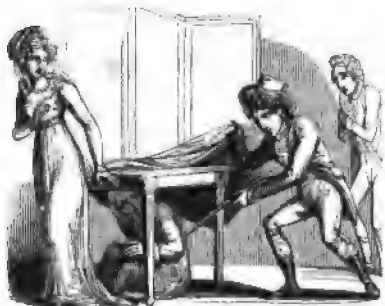
Young P. What care I for your brother Bob.

[*Going.*]

Maria. How can you be so cruel, Mr. Philpot? how can you?—oh—[*Cries, and struggles with him. Exit Young Philpot*] Ha, ha! I have carried my brother's scheme into execution charmingly—ha, ha!—He will break off the match now of his own accord—Ha, ha! 'This is charming—this is fine—this is like a girl of spirit.

[*Exit.*]

ACT THE SECOND.



SCENE I.

Enter CORINNA, followed by TOM.

Cor. An elderly gentleman, did you say?

Tom. Yes, that says he has got a letter for you, ma'am.

Cor. Desire the gentleman to walk up stairs.

[Exit Tom.]

Enter PHILPOT.

Servant, sir.

Phil. Fair lady, your very humble servant—Truly a blooming young girl!—Madam, I have a letter here for you from Bob Poacher; whom, I presume, you know.

Cor. Yes, sir, I know Bob Poacher—he is a very good friend of mine! *[Reads to herself]* He speaks so handsomely of you, sir, and says you are so much of the gentleman, that to be sure, sir, I shall endeavour to be agreeable, sir.

Phil. Really you are very agreeable. You see I am punctual to my hour. *[Looks at his Watch.]*

Cor. That is a mighty pretty watch, sir.

Phil. Yes, madam, it is a repeater; it has been in our family for a long time—This is a mighty pretty lodging—I have twenty guineas here in a purse; here they are, [*Turns them out on the Table*] as pretty golden rogues as ever your fair fingers play'd with.

Cor. I am always agreeable to any thing from a gentleman.

Phil. There are some light guineas among them—I always put off my light guineas in this way. [*Aside*] You are exceedingly welcome, madam. Your fair hand looks so tempting, I must kiss it—Oh! I could eat it up—Fair lady, your lips look so cherry—they actually invite the touch. [*Kisses her*]—really it makes the difference of cent. per cent. in one's constitution.

Young P. [*Within*] Gee-houp!—Awhi!—Awhi!—Gallows!—Awhi!

Phil. Hey—what is all that?—Somebody coming!

Cor. Some young rake, I fancy, coming in, whether my servants will or no.

Phil. What shall I do?—I would not be seen for the world. Can't you hide me in that room?

Cor. Dear heart! No, sir.—These wild young fellows take such liberties—he may take it into his head to go in there, and then you will be detected.—Get under the table; he shan't remain long, whoever he is. Here—here, sir, get under here.

Phil. Ay, ay, that will do—Don't let him stay long—Give me another buss—Wounds! I could—

Cor. Hush!—make haste.

Phil. Ay, ay, I will, fair lady. [*Creeps under the Table, and peeps out*] Don't let him stay long.

Cor. Hush! silence! you will ruin all else.

Enter Young PHILPOT, dressed out.

Young P. Sharper, do your work—Awhi! awhi!—So, my girl—how dost do?

Cor. Very well, thank you.—I did not expect to see you so soon—I thought you was to be at the club.

Young P. No, the run was against me again, and I did not care to persue 'll fortune. But I am strong in cash, my girl.

Cor. Are you?

Young P. Yes, yes—Suskins in plenty.

Phil. [Peeping] Ah, the ungracious! These are your haunts, are they? [Aside.]

Young P. Yes, yes, I am strong in cash—I have taken in an old curmudgeon since I saw you.

Cor. As how, pray?

Phil. [Peeping] Ay, as how? let us hear, pray. [Aside.]

Young P. Why I'll tell you. I talk'd a world of wisdom to him, tipp'd him a few rascally sentiments of a scoundrelly kind of prudence, and then he took a liking to me—"Ay, ay," says he, "friendship has nothing to do with trade—George, thou art a son after my own heart—A fool and his money are soon parted."—[Mimics him] And so on he went, like Harlequin in a French comedy, tickling himself into a good humour, till at last I tickled him out of fifteen hundred and odd pounds.

Phil. I have a mind to rise and break his bones—but then I discover myself.—Lie still, Isaac, lie still. [Aside.]

Young P. Oh! I understand trap—I talk'd of a great house stopping payment.—The thing was true enough, but I had no dealing with them.

Phil. Ay, ay. [Aside.]

Young P. And so, for fear of breaking off a match with an idiot he wants me to marry, he lent me the money, and cheated me though.

Phil. Ay, you have found it out, have ye? [Aside.]

Young P. He is an old curmudgeon—and so I will talk no more about him. Come, give me a kiss.

Phil. The young dog, how he fastens his lips to her! [Kisses her.] [Aside.]

Young P. You shall go with me to Epsom next Sunday.

Cor. Shall I? That's charming.

Young P. You shall, in my chariot—I drive.

Cor. But I don't like to see you drive.

Young P. But I like it—I am as good a coachman as any in England.—There was my lord—What-d'ye-call-him—he kept a stage-coach for his own driving; but, Lord! he was nothing to me.

Cor. No?

Young P. Oh! no—I know my road work, my girl, when I have my coachman's hat on. Is my hat come home?

Cor. It hangs up yonder; but I don't like it.

Young P. Let me see it.—Ay, the very thing!—Mind me when I go to work—Throw my eyes about a few—handle the braces, take the off-leader by the jaw—Here, you—how have you curb'd this horse up?—Let him out a link, do, you blood of a—Whoo, eh!—Jewel!—Button!—Whoo, eh!—Come here, you sir, how have you coupled Gallows?—you know he'll take the bar of Sharper—Take him in two holes, do.—There's four pretty little knots as any in England—Whoo, eh!

Cor. But can't you let your coachman drive?

Young P. No, no—see me mount the box, handle the reins, my wrist turn'd down, square my elbows, stamp with my foot—Gee up!—Off we go—Button, do you want to have us over?—Do your work, do—Awhi! awhi!—There we bowl away—see how sharp they are—Gallows!—Softly up hill—[*Whistles*]—There's a public house—give 'em a mouthful of water, do—and fetch me a dram—Drink it off—Gee up!—Awhi! awhi!—There we go scrambling together—reach Epsom in an hour and forty-three minutes, all Lombard-street to an egg-shell, we do—There's your work, my girl!—Rh! damn me—

Phil. Mercy on me! What a profligate, debauched young dog it is! [*Aside.*]

Enter Young WILDING.

Young W. Ha! my little Corinna—Sir, your servant.

Young P. Your servant, sir.

Young W. Sir, your servant.

Young P. Any commands for me, sir?

Young W. For you, sir?

Young P. Yes, for me, sir.

Young W. No, sir, I have no commands for you.

Young P. What's your business?

Young W. Business?

Young P. Ay, business.

Young W. Why, very good business, I think—My little Corinna—my life—my little—

Young P. Is that your business?—Pray, sir, not so free, sir.

Young W. Not so free?

Young P. No, sir—that lady belongs to me.

Young W. To you, sir?

Young P. Yes, to me.

Young W. To you? Who are you?

Young P. As good a man as you!

Young W. Upon my word!—Who is this fellow, Corinna? Some journeyman tailor, I suppose, who chooses to try on the gentleman's clothes before he carries them home?

Young P. Tailor!—What do you mean by that?—You lie, I am no tailor!

Young W. You shall give me satisfaction for that.

Young P. For what?

Young W. For giving me the lie.

Young P. I did not.

Young W. You did, sir.

Young P. You lie—I'll bet you five pounds I did not—But you have a mind for a frolic—let me put by my sword.—Now, sir, come on. [*In a boxing Attitude.*]

Young W. Why, you scoundrel, do you think I want to box?—Draw, sir, this moment.

Young P. Not I—come on—

Young W. Draw, or I'll cut you to pieces.

Young P. I'll give you satisfaction this way.

Young W. And I'll give you satisfaction this way—
[*Pushes at him*] Draw, sir—draw—You won't draw?
—There, take that, sirrah—and that—and that, you scoundrel.

Phil. [*Peeping*] Ay, ay, well done, lay it on. [*Aside*
Young W. And there, you rascal, and there——

Phil. Thank you, thank you. Could not you find in your heart to lay him on another for me? [*Aside*.

Cor. Pray don't be in such a passion, sir.

Young W. My dear Corinna, don't be frightened; I shall not murder him.

Phil. I am safe here—lie still, Isaac, lie still——I am safe. [*Aside*.

Young W. The fellow has put me out of breath—
[*Sits down Philpot's Watch strikes ten under the Table*] What watch is that? [*Stares round*] Hey! what is all this? [*Looks under the Table*] Your humble servant, sir! Turn out pray—turn out——You won't?——Then I'll unshell you. [*Takes away the Table*]—Your very humble servant, sir.

Young P. Zounds! my father there all this time! [*Aside*.

Young W. I suppose you will give me the lie too. [*To Philpot*.

Phil. [*Still on the Ground*] No, sir, not I truly.—But the gentleman there may divert himself again, if he has a mind.—George, you are there, I see.

Young P. Yes, sir; and you are there, I see.

Young W. Come, rise, sir; you are too old to be beat.

Phil. [*Rises*] In troth, so I am; but there you may exercise yourself again, if you please.

Young P. No, no more for me, sir—I thank you.

Young W. Ha, ha! upon my soul I can't help laughing at this old Square-toes.—As for you, sir, you have had what you deserv'd, ha, ha! you are a kind cull, I suppose ha, ha! And you, reverend dad, you must come here tottering after a punk, ha, ha!

Phil. Oh! George! George!

Young P. Oh! father! father!

Young W. Ha, ha! what, father and son? And so you have found one another out, ha, ha!——Well, you may have business, and so, gentlemen, I'll leave you to yourselves. [*Exit*.

Young P. Don't be angry with me, sir—I'll go my ways this moment, tie myself up in a matrimonial noose, and never have any thing to do with these courses again. [Going.]

Phil. And, hark you, George, tie me up in a real noose, and turn me off as soon as you will. [Exit.]

SCENE II. *An Apartment.*

Enter BEAUFORT, *dressed as a Lawyer, and* SIR JASPER WILDING, *with a Bottle and Glass in his Hand.*

Beau. No more, sir Jasper; I can't drink any more.

Sir J. Why, you be but a weezen-fac'd drinker, master Quagmire—come, man, finish this bottle.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Old Mr. Philpot, sir, and his son.

Sir J. Wounds! that's right; they'll take me out of the hand of this lawyer here.

Enter PHILPOT *and* Young PHILPOT.

Master Philpot, I be glad you are come: this man here has so plagued me with his ley; but now we'll have no more about it, but sign the papers at once.

Phil. Sir Jasper, twenty thousand pounds, you know, is a great deal of money—I should not give you so much, if it was not for the sake of your daughter's marrying my son; so that if you will allow me discount for prompt payment, I will pay the money down.

Young P. Sir, I must beg to see the young lady once more before I embark; for to be plain, sir, she appears to me a mere natural.

Sir J. I'll tell you what, youngster, I find my girl a notable wench.—Well, young gentleman, which way is your mind now?

Young P. Why, sir, to be plain, I find your daughter an idiot.

Sir J. Zee her again then—zee her again.—Here you, sirrah, send our Moll hither.

Serv. Yes, sir.

[Exit.]

Sir J. Very well then, we'll go into t'other room, crack a bottle, and settle matters there—and leave us together.—Hoio! hoio! Our Moll—Tally over—

Enter MARIA.

Maria. Did you call me, papa?

Sir J. I did, my girl—There, the gentleman wants to speak with you—behave like a clever wench, as you are—Come along, my boys—Master Quagmire, come and finish the business.

[Exit singing, with Philpot and Beaufort.]
Young P. I know she is a fool, and so I will speak to her without ceremony—Well, miss, you told me you could read and write?

Maria. Read, sir; reading is the delight of my life—Do you love reading, sir?

Young P. Prodigiously!—How pert she's grown. I have read very little, and I'm resolv'd for the future to read less. *[Aside]* What have you read, miss?

Maria. Every thing.

Young P. You have?

Maria. Yes, sir, I have.

Young P. Oh! brave—and do you remember what you read, miss?

Maria. Not so well as I could wish—wits have short memories.

Young P. Oh! you are a wit too?

Maria. I am—and do you know that I feel myself provok'd to a simile now.

Young P. Provok'd to a simile!—Let us hear it.

Maria. What do you think we are both like?

Young P. Well—

Maria. Like Cymon and Iphigenia in Dryden's fable.

Young P. Jenny in Dryden's fable?

Maria. The fanning breeze upon her bosom blows,
To meet the fanning breeze her bosom rose.

That's me—now you—

He trudg'd along, unknowing what he sought,
And whistled as he went *[Mimics]* for want of thought.

Young P. This is not the same girl.. *[Aside.]*

Maria. Mark again, mark again:
The fool of nature stood with stupid eyes,
And gaping mouth, that testified surprise.

[*He looks foolish, she laughs at him.*]

Young P. I must take care how I speak to her; she is not the fool I took her for. [*Aside.*]

Maria. You seem surpris'd, sir; but this is my way; I read, sir, and then I apply. I have read every thing—Suckling, Waller, Milton, Dryden, Lansdown, Gay, Prior, Swift, Addison, Pope, Young, Thomson—

Young P. Hey! the devil! what a clack is here!

[*Aside. Walks across the Stage.*]

Maria. [*Follows him eagerly*] Shakspeare, Fletcher, Otway, Southern, Rowe, Congreve, Wycherly, Farquhar, Cibber, Vanbrugh, Steel—in short every body; and I find them all wit, vivacity, spirit, genius, taste, imagination, raillery, humour, character, and sentiment.

Young P. Her tongue goes like a water-mill. [*Aside.*]

Maria. What do you say to me now, sir?

Young P. Say! I don't know what the devil to say.

[*Aside.*]

Maria. What's the matter, sir? Why you look as if the stocks were fallen—or like London-bridge at low water—or like a waterman when the Thames is frozen—or like a politician without news—or like a prude without scandal—or like a great lawyer without a brief—or like some lawyers with one—or—

Young P. Or like a poor devil of a husband hen-peck'd by a wit; and so say no more of that.

Maria. Oh, fie! you have spoil'd all—I had not half done.

Young P. There is enough, of all conscience; you may content yourself.

Maria. But I can't be so easily contented; I like a simile half a mile long.

Young P. I see you do.

Maria. Oh! and I make verses—verses like an angel—off hand—extempore. Can you give me an extempore?

Young P. What does she mean? [*Aside*] No, miss, I have never a one about me.

Maria. You can't give me an extempore?—Oh, for shame, Mr. Philpot!—I love an extempore of all things; and I love the poets dearly; their sense so fine, their invention rich as Pactolus.

Young P. A poet rich as Pactolus! I have heard of Pactolus in the city.

Maria. Very like.

Young P. But you never heard of a poet as rich as he?

Maria. As who?

Young P. Pactolus. He was a great Jew merchant—liv'd in the ward of Farringdon-without.

Maria. Pactolus, a Jew merchant! Pactolus is a river.

Young P. A river?

Maria. Yes. Don't you understand geography?

Young P. The girl's crazy.

Maria. Oh, sir, if you don't understand geography, you are nobody.—I understand geography, and I understand orthography; you know I told you I can write—and I can dance too. Will you dance a minuet?

[*Sings and dances.*]

Young P. You shan't lead me a dance, I promise you.

Maria. Oh! very well, sir—you refuse me—remember you'll hear immediately of my being married to another, and then you'll be ready to hang yourself.

Young P. Not I, I promise you.

Maria. Oh! very well—very well—remember—mark my words—I'll do it—you shall see—ha, ha!

Young P. Marry you! I would as soon carry my wife to live in Bow-street, and write over the door—"Philpot's punch-house."

Re-enter PHILPOT and SIR JASPER WILDING.

Maria. Well, papa, the gentleman won't have me.

Phil. The numskull won't do as his father bids him; and so, sir Jasper, with your consent, I'll make a proposal to the young lady myself.

Maria. How! what does he say?

Phil. I am in the prime of my days, and I can be a

brisk lover still—Fair lady, a glance of your eye is like the returning sun in the spring—It melts away the frost of age, and gives a new warmth and vigour to all nature.

[*Falls a Coughing.*]

Maria. Pray, sir, can I have two husband's at a time?

Young P. There is a question now! She is grown foolish again.

Phil. Fair lady, the law of the land——

Sir J. Hold ye, hold ye, let me talk of law; I know the law better nor any on ye——Two husbands at once—No; no——Men are scarce, and that's downright poaching.

Maria. I am sorry for it, sir——For then I can't marry him, I see.

Sir J. Why not?

Maria. I am contracted to another.

Sir J. Contracted! To whom?

Maria. To Mr. Beaufort. That gentleman, sir.

Phil. That gentleman!

Beau. Yes, sir. [*Throws open his Gown*] My name is Beaufort——And I hope, sir Jasper, when you consider my fortune, and my real affection for your daughter, you will generously forgive the stratagem I have made use of.

Sir J. Master Quagmire! What, are you young Beaufort all this time?

Phil. That won't take, sir; that won't take.

Beau. But it must take, sir. You have signed the deeds for your daughter's marriage; and sir Jasper, by this instrument, has made me his son-in-law.

Maria. Well, brother, how have I play'd my part?

Wild. Beau. To a miracle.

Maria. Have I?——I don't know how that is.

Love urg'd me on to try all wily arts

To win your——[*To Beaufort*] no! not yours——

To win your hearts. [*To the Audience.*]

Your hearts to win is now my aim alone;

“There if I grow, the harvest is your own.”

[*Exeunt.*]

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY PHILPOT AND YOUNG PHILPOT.

Phil. Oh! George, George, George! 'tis such young rakes as you
That bring vile jokes, and foul dishonour too,
Upon our city youth.

Young P. 'Tis very true.

Phil. St. James's end o'th' town

Young P. No place for me:

Phil. No truly—no—their manners disagree
With our's entirely—yet you there must run,
To ape their follies—

Young P. And so I am undone.

Phil. There you all learn a vanity in vice,
You turn mere fops—you game;

Young P. Oh! damn the dice.

Phil. Bubbled at play—

Young P. Yes, sir—

Phil. By every common cheat.

Young P. Ay! here's two witnesses— [*Pulls out his Pockets.*]

Phil. You get well beat.

Young P. A witness too of that. [*Shows his Head*] And there's
another. [*To Young Wilding.*]

Phil. You dare to give affronts—

Young P. Zounds, such a pother!

Phil. Affronts a gentleman!—

Young P. 'Twas a rash action.

Phil. Damn me, you lie; I'll give you satisfaction. [*Mimicking.*]
Drawn in by strumpets—and detected too.

Young P. That's a sad thing—Sir, I'll be judged by you.

Phil. The dog he has me there.

Young P. Think you it right;

Under a table—

Phil. Miserable plight.

Young P. For grave threescore to sculk with trembling knees,
And envy each young lover that he sees!
Think you it fitting thus abroad to roam!

Phil. Would I had staid to cast accounts at home.

Young P. Ay! there's another vice—

Phil. Sirrah, give o'er.

Young P. You brood for ever o'er your much lov'd store,
And scraping cent. per cent. still pine for more.

At Jonathan's, where millions are undone,
Now cheat a nation, and now cheat your son.

Phil. Rascal, enough!

Young P. I could add, but am loath—

Phil. Enough!—this jury [*To the Audience*] will convict us both.

Young P. Then to the court we'd better make submission:

La-ties and gentlemen, with true contrition,
I here repent my faults—ye courtly train,
Farewell;—farewell, ye giddy and ye vain!
I now take up—forsake the gay and witty,
To live henceforth a credit to the city.

Phil. You see me here quite cover'd o'er with shame.

I hate long speeches—But I'll do the same.

Come, George—To mend is all the best can boast;

Young P. Then let us in,

Phil. And this shall be our toast—

May Britain's thunder on her foe, be hurl'd,

Young P. And London prove the market of the world.

COMUS.

A Mask.

ALTERED FROM MILTON.

CORRECTLY GIVEN, FROM COPIES USED IN THE THEATRES,

BY

THOMAS DIBDIN,

Author of several Dramatic Pieces: and

PROMPTER OF THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.



Printed at the Chiswick Press,

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1815.



COMUS.

THIS sublime drama of the prince of poets was first presented at Ludlow-castle, before the Earl of Bridgewater, then President of Wales, in 1634. The chief actors, each of whom played more than one part, were the Lord Brackly; Mr. Thomas Egerton, his brother; and the Lady Alice Egerton. The real consanguinity of the actors and actresses must have given additional interest to the scenes of the brothers and sister in the poem.

It was altered with additions from the works of its immortal author, and produced at Drury-lane in 1738, by Doctor Dalton. Another alteration was brought out at Covent-garden by the senior Colman in 1772; and it has recently been brought forward, with great and appropriate splendour at the same theatre, with still further variations. The present copy steers somewhat between the two last named productions, adhering mostly to the latter. To add any opinion on a poem of Milton's would be presumptuous.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	<i>Drury Lane, 1790.</i>	<i>Covent Garden, 1815.</i>
<i>Comus</i>	Mr. Wroughton.	Mr. Conway.
<i>Spirit</i>	Mr. Lamash.	Mr. Durusset.
<i>Elder Brother</i> . .	Mr. Benson.	Mr. Abbott.
<i>Younger Brother</i>	Mr. Banks.	Miss Foote.
<i>Chief Bacchanals</i> {	Messrs. Dignum, Messrs. Incedon,	
	Kelly, Sedg-	Taylor, Sinclair,
	wick, &c.	&c.
<i>Lady</i>	Mrs. Ward.	Mrs. Fawcitt.
<i>Euphrosyne</i> . . .	Mrs. Crouch.	Miss Matthews.
<i>Sabrina</i>	Miss Romanzini.	Mrs. Bishop.
<i>Pastoral Nymph</i>	Miss Hagley.	Miss Stephens.
<i>Bacchantes</i> . . .	Mrs. Edwards.	Mrs. Liston.
<i>Bacchanals, Spi-</i> {		
<i>rits, &c.</i> }		Mrs. Sterling, &c.

ACT THE FIRST.



SCENE I. *A Wood.*

Enter SPIRIT.

Spi. **B**EFORE the starry threshold of Jove's court
My mansion is, where those immortal shapes
Of bright aerial spirits live inspher'd
In regions wild, of calm and serene air,
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot,
Which men call earth; and with low-thoughted care
Confin'd and pester'd to this pinfold here,
Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
Unmindful of the crown that virtue gives,
After this mortal change, to her true servants,
Amongst th' enthron'd gods on sainted seats.
But, to my task.

Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape
Crush'd the sweet poison of misused wine,
On Circe's island sell: this nymph had by him a son,
Much like his father, but his mother more,
Whom therefore she brought up, and Comus nam'd;
Who, in thick shelter of these shades embower'd,

Exceeds his mother at her mighty art,
 Offering to ev'ry traveller
 His orient liquor in a crystal glass.
 Soon as the potion works, their human countenance
 Is chang'd into some brutish form, and they
 Not once perceive their foul disfigurement.
 Therefore, when any favour'd of high Jove,
 Chances to pass through this adventurous glade,
 I shoot from heav'n, to give him safe convoy.
 But first, I take the likeness of a swain,
 And hark—I hear the tread of hateful steps. [Exit.

*Enter COMUS, with a Rout of Men and Women dressed
 as Bacchanals.*

Com. The star, that bids the shepherd fold,
 Now the top of heaven doth hold;
 And the gilded car of day
 His glowing axle doth allay
 In the steep Atlantic stream;
 And the slope sun his upward beam
 Shoots against the dusky pole,
 Paving toward the other goal
 Of his chamber in the east;
 Meanwhile welcome joy and feast!

AIR.—By a Bacchanal.

Now Phoebus sinketh in the west.
 Welcome song, and welcome jest,
 Midnight shout and revelry,
 Tipsy dance and jollity;
 Braid your locks with rosy twine,
 Dropping odours, dropping wine!

Rigour now is gone to bed,
 And advice, with scrup'ulous head,
 Strict age, and sour severity,
 With their grave saws to slumber lie.

Com. We that are of purer fire,
 Imitate the starry choir,

Who in their nightly watchful spheres
Lead in swift round the months and years.
The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,
Now to the moon in wav'ring morris move;
And on the tawny sands and shelves
Trip the pert fairies and the dapper elves.

AIR.—*By a Bacchante.*

By dimpl'd brook, and fountain brim
The woodnymphs, deck'd with dasies trim,
Their merry wakes and pastimes keep:
What has night to do with sleep?

Night has better sweets to prove,
Venus now wakes, and wakens love:
Come let us our rites begin!

'Tis only day-light that makes sin.

Com. Hail, goddess of nocturnal sport—
Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,
Wherein thou rid'st with Hecate; and befriend
Us thy vow'd priests!
Till the nice morn on th' Indian steep
From her cabin loophole peep,
And to the telltale sun descry
Our conceal'd solemnity.

DUETT.—*By a Man and Woman.*

From tyrant laws and customs free,
We follow sweet variety;
By turns we drink, and dance, and sing,
Time for ever on the wing.

Why should niggard rules control
Transports of the jovial soul?
No dull stinting hour we own;
Pleasure counts our time alone.

Com. Come! knit hands and beat the ground
In a light fantastic round. [A dance.
Break off, break off! I feel the diff'rent pace
Of some chaste footing near about this ground,
Run to your shrouds, within these brakes and trees;

Our number may affright. *[Exeunt all but Comus.*
Some virgin sure

(For so I can distinguish by my art),
 Benighted in these woods. Now to my charms,
 And to my wily trains! Thus I hurl
 My spells into the air—When once her eye
 Hath met the virtue of this magic dust,
 I shall appear some harmless villager.
 But see she stops, and seems
 As she'd address herself in song.

AIR.—By a LADY. behind.

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen
 Within thy airy cell,
 By slow meander's margin green,
 And in the violet-embroider'd vale,
 Where the love-lorn nightingale
 Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well!
 Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair,
 That likest thy Narcissus are?

O! if thou have
 Hid them in some flow'ry cave,
 Tell me but where,

Sweet queen of parly, daughter of the sphere;
 So may'st thou be translated to the skies,
 And give resounding grace to all heav'n's harmonics!

Com. Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
 Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
 But see she approaches; I step aside
 And hearken, if I may her business hear.

Enter LADY.

Lady. This way the noise was, if mine ear be true,
 My best guide now; methought it was the sound
 Of riot and ill-manag'd mirth. I should be loth
 To meet the rudeness, and swill'd insolence
 Of such late rioters; yet O! where else
 Shall I inform my unacquainted feet
 In the blind mazes of this tangled wood?

Com. I'll ease her of that care, and be her guide.

[*Aside.*

Lady. My brothers, when they saw me weary'd out,
Stepp'd, as they said, to the next thicket side,
To bring me berries, or such cooling fruit,
As the kind hospitable woods provide.
But where they are, and why they come not back,
Is now the labour of my thoughts; 'tis likeliest
They had engag'd their wand'ring steps too far:
I cannot halloo to my brothers, but
Such noise as I could make to be heard furthest
I have ventur'd; for my new enliven'd spirits
Prompt me: and they perhaps are not far off.

Com. Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
And with these raptures moves the vocal air
To testify his hidden residence:
How sweetly did they float upon the wings
Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night,
At ev'ry fall smoothing the raven down
Of darkness, till it smil'd; I have oft heard
My mother Circe, with the syrens three,
Who, as they sung, would take the prison'd soul,
And lap it in Elysium: Scylla wept,
And chid her barking waves into attention,
And fell Charybdis murmur'd soft applause;
Yet they in pleasing slumber lull'd the sense,
And sweet in madness robb'd it of itself.
But such a sacred and home-felt delight,
Such sober certainty of waking bliss,
I never heard till now—I'll speak to her,
And she shall be my queen. [*Aside*]—Hail, foreign
wonder,

Whom certain these rough shades did never breed,
Unless the goddess that in rural shrine
Dwell'st here with Pan or Silvan, by bless'd song
Forbidding ev'ry bleak, unkindly fog
To touch the prosperous growth of this tall wood.

Lady. Nay, gentle shepherd, ill is lost that praise,
That is address'd to unattending ears;

Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift
How to regain my sever'd company,
Compell'd me to awake the courteous Echo,
To give me answer from her mossy couch.

Com. What chance, good lady, hath bereft you thus?

Lady. Dim darkness and this leafy labyrinth.

Com. Could that divide you from near ush'ring guides?

Lady. They left me weary on a grassy turf,
To seek i'th' valley some cool friendly spring.

Com. And left your fair side all unguarded, lady?

Lady. They were but twain, and purpos'd quick
return.

Com. Imports their loss, beside the present need?

Lady. No less than if I should my brothers lose.

Com. Were they of manly prime, or youthful bloom?

Lady. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazor'd lips.

Com. Two such I saw, what time the labour'd ox
In his loose traces from the furrows came,
And the swink't hedger at his supper sat;
I saw them under a green mantling vine,
That crawls along the side of yon small hill,
Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots;
Their port was more than human; as they stood,
I took it for a fairy vision

Of some gay creatures of the element,
That in the colours of the rainbow live,
And play i'th' plaited clouds. I was awe struck,
And as I pass'd, I worshipp'd: if these you seek,
It were a journey like the path to heav'n,
To help you find them.

Lady. Gentle villager, what readiest way would bring
Me to that place?

Com. I know each lane, and ev'ry alley green,
Dingle, or bushy dell of this wild wood.
My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood;
And if your stray attendance be yet lodg'd,
Or shroud within these limits, I shall know
Ere morrow wake, or the low roosted lark
From her thatch'd pillar rouse; or grant it otherwise,

I can conduct you, lady, to a low,
But loyal cottage, where you may be safe till further
quest.

Lady. Shepherd, I take thy word,
And trust thy offer'd service. In a place
Less warranted than this, or less secure,
I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.
Eye me, bless'd Providence, and square my trial
To my proportion'd strength! Shepherd, lead on.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter COMUS's Crew from behind the Trees.

AIR.—By a Man.

Fly swiftly, ye minutes, till Comus receive
The nameless soft transports that beauty can give;
The bowl's frolic joys let him teach her to prove,
And she in return yield the raptures of love!

Without love and wine, wit and beauty are vain,
All grandeur insipid, and riches a pain;
The most splendid palace grows dark as the grave;
Love and wine give, ye gods, or take back what you
gave.

Cho. Away, away, away,
To Comus' court repair;
There night outshines the day,
There yields the melting fair. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *A Wood.*

Enter the Two BROTHERS.

E. Bro. Unmuffle, ye faint stars; and thou, fair moon,
That wont'st to love the trav'ler's benison,
Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,
And disinherit chaos, that reigns here
In double night of darkness and of shades.

Y. Bro. Or, if our eyes
Be barr'd that happiness, might we but know
The sound of past'ral reed with oaten stops,

Or whistle from the lodge, or village cook,
'Twould be some solace yet, some little cheering,
In this close dungeon of innum'rous boughs.
But O, that hapless virgin, our lost sister!
Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now,
Or 'gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm,
Leans her unpillow'd head, fraught with sad fears;
Or, while we speak, within the direful grasp
Of savage hunger, or of savage heat.

E. Bro. Peace, brother; be not over exquisite,
To cast the fashion of uncertain evils:
For grant they be so, while they rest unknown,
What need a man forestal his date of grief,
And run to meet what he would most avoid?
Virtue could see to do what virtue would,
By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
Were in the flat sea sunk: and wisdom's self
Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude,
Where, with her best nurse, contemplation,
She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings.
He that has light within his own clear breast,
May sit i'th' centre, and enjoy bright day.
But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts,
Benighted walks under the mid-day sun,
Himself is his own dungeon.

Y. Bro. 'Tis most true,
That musing meditation most affects
The pensive secrecy of desert cell,
Far from the cheerful haunt of men and herds,
And sits as safe as in a senate house;
But beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree,
Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
Of dragon watch, with unenchanted eye,
To save her blossoms and defend her fruit
From the rash hand of bold incontinence.

E. Bro. My sister is not so defenceless left
As you imagine; she has a hidden strength,
Which you remember not.

Y. Bro. What hidden strength?

E. Bro. 'Tis chastity, my brother, chastity;
She that has that is clad in complete steel,
And like a quiver'd nymph, with arrows keen
May trace huge forests, and unharbour'd heaths,
Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds.
So dear to heav'n is saintly chastity,
That when a soul is found sincerely so,
A thousand liveried angels lackey her,
Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt,
And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence,
Till all he made immortal. [*A Halloo heard.*]
List, list; I hear

Some far-off halloo break the silent air.

Y. Bro. Methought so too; what should it be?

E. Bro. Either some one like us night-founder'd here,
Or else some neighbour woodman, or at worst,
Some roving robber calling to his fellows.

Y. Bro. Heav'n keep my sister! [*Halloo*] Again!
again! and near!

Best draw, and stand upon our guard.

E. Bro. I'll halloo;

If he be friendly, he comes well; if not,
Defence is a good cause, and heav'n be for us.

Enter the SPIRIT, habited like a Shepherd.

Y. Bro. That halloo I should know—What are you?
speak.

Spi. What voice is that? My young lord? Speak
again.

Y. Bro. O brother, 'tis my father's shepherd sure.

Spi. O, my lov'd master's heir, and his next joy,
Where is my virgin lady? where is she?
How chance she is not in your company?

E. Bro. To tell thee sadly, shepherd, without blame,
Or our neglect, we lost her as we came.

Spi. Ah me unhappy! then my fears are true.

E. Bro. What fears, good Thyrsis? pr'ythee briefly
show.

Spi. Within the bosom of this hideous wood,

Immur'd in oypress shades, a sorc'rer dwells,
 Of Bacchus and of Circe born; great Comus,
 Deep skill'd in all his mother's witcheries,
 And wanton as his father. This I learn'd
 Tending my flocks hard by; whence night by night,
 He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl;
 Yet have they many baits and guileful spells,
 T' inveigle and invite th' unwary sense.

[*A loud Laugh.*

But hark! the beaten timbrel's jarring sound,
 And wild tumultuous mirth, proclaim their presence;
 Onward they move; and this way guide their steps.
 Let us withdraw awhile! [*They retire.*

*Enter COMUS's Crew, revelling; the ELDER BROTHER
 advances and speaks.*

E. Bro. What are you? speak! that thus in wanton
 riot

And midnight revelry, like drunken Bacchanals,
 Invade the silence of these lonely shades?

1 Wom. Ye godlike youths,
 Bless the propitious star that led you to us;
 We are the happiest of the race of mortals;
 Of freedom, mirth, and joy the only heirs;
 But you shall share them with us; for this cup,
 This nectar'd cup, the sweet assurance gives
 Of present, and the pledge of future bliss.

AIR.—*By a Man.*

By the gayly circling glass
 We can see how minutes pass;
 By the hollow cask are told
 How the waning night grows old.

Soon, too soon, the busy day
 Drives us from our sport and play.
 What have we with day to do?
 Sons of care, 'twas made for you!

[*A Female offers the Cup, which they both put by.*

E. Bro. Forbear, nor offer us the poison'd sweets.

1 Wom. Oh! how unseemly shows in blooming youth
Such grey severity!—But come with us;
We to the bow'r of bliss will guide your steps

AIR.

Would you taste the noontide air?
To yon fragrant bow'r repair,
Where, woven with the poplar bough,
The mantling vine will shelter you.

Down each side a fountain flows,
Tinkling, murm'ring, as it goes
Lightly o'er the mossy ground,
Sultry Phoebus scorching round.

Round the languid herds and sheep
Stretch'd o'er sunny hillocks sleep,
While on the hyacinth and rose
The fair does all alone repose.

All alone—and in her arms
Your breast may beat to love's alarms,
Till, bless'd and blessing, you shall own
The joys of love are joys alone.

Y. Bro. How low sinks beauty when by vice debas'd!
Fair were that form, if virtue dwelt within;
But from the wanton advocate of shame
To me the warbled song harsh discord sounds.

2 Wom. No more; these formal maxims misbecome
you.
They only suit suspicious shrivell'd age.

TRIO.—*By a Man and two Women.*

Live and love, enjoy the fair,
Banish sorrow, banish care;
Mind not what old dotards say!
Age has had his share of play;
But youth's sport begins to day.

From the fruits of sweet delight
 Let not scarecrow virtue fright!
 Here in pleasure's vineyard we
 Rove, like birds, from tree to tree,
 Careless, airy, gay, and free.

E. Bro. How can your impious tongues profane the
 name

Of sacred virtue, and yet promise pleasure
 In lying songs of vanity and vice?

1 Wom. Turn not away, but listen to our strain,
 That shall in pleasing slumber lull the sense,
 And sweet in madness rob it of itself.

DUETT.—*First Man and Woman.*

Wom. O, thou wert born to please me,

Man. My life, my only love!

Wom. Through all the woods I'll praise thee,

Man. My rural queen of love.

Wom. Thus happy, never

Man. Jealous,

Wom. Can any harm

Man. Assail us?

Wom. Can any harm assail us, my shepherd of the
 grove?

Man. Can any harm assail us, my rural queen of love?

Wom. Feel how my heart is beating, my shepherd of
 the grove.

Man. The pulse of life retreating, my rural queen of
 love.

The pulse of life retreating,

Wom. My shepherd of the grove.

Man. Thus love's sweet poison drinking,

Wom. Dear idol of my love.

E. Bro. From virtue sever'd, pleasure frenzy grows,
 And always flies at reason's cool return.
 But we forget; who hears the voice of truth,
 In noisy riot and intemp'rance drown'd?

Thyrsis, be thou our guide! We'll follow thee;
And some good angel bear a shield before us!

[*Exeunt Brothers and Spirit.*]

1 *Wom.* Come, come, my friends, and partners of my
joys,

Leave to yon pedant youths their bookish dreams;
A beardless Cynic is the shame of nature,
Beyond the cure of this inspiring cup;
Away, nor waste a moment more about 'em.

CHORUS.

Away, away, away,
To Comus' court repair;
There night outshines the day,
There yields the melting fair. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT THE SECOND.



SCENE I. *A gay Pavilion.*

COMUS and *Attendants on each side of the LADY, who is seated in an enchanted Chair.*

Com. Come, thou goddess fair and free,
In heav'n yclep'd Euphrosyne,
And by men heart-easing mirth,
Whom lovely Venus at a birth,
With two sister graces more,
To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore!
Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful jollity,
Quips and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods and becks, and wreathed smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport, that wrinkled care derides;
And laughter, holding both his sides!
Come, and trip it as you go,
On the light fantastic toe:
And in thy right hand lead with thee,
The mountain nymph, sweet liberty.

AIR.—*By a Man.*

Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee,
Jest and youthful jollity,
Quips and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods and becks, and wreathed smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport, that wrinkled care derides;
And laughter, holding both his sides!

Cho. Haste thee, nymph, &c.

Enter EUPHROSYNE.

AIR.—EUPHROSYNE.

Come, come, bid adieu to fear!
Love and harmony reign here.
No domestic, jealous jars,
Buzzing slanders, wordy wars,
In our presence will appear;
Love and harmony reign here.

Sighs to am'rous sighs returning,
Pulses beating, bosoms burning;
Bosoms with warm wishes panting;
Words to speak those wishes wanting,
Are the only tumults here,
All the woes you need to fear;
Love and harmony reign here.

Lady. How long must I, by magic fetters chain'd
To this detested seat, hear odious strains
Of shameless folly, which my soul abhors?

Com. Now softly slow sweet Lydian airs attune,
And breathe the pleasing pangs of gentle love.

[*A Pastoral Nymph advances slowly, with a melancholy and desponding Air, to the Side of the Stage, and repeats, by way of Soliloquy, the first six Lines, and then sings the Ballad. She is observed by Euphrosyne, who by her Gesture expresses her different Sentiments of the Subject of her Complaint, suitably to the Character of their several Songs.*

RECITATIVE.—*Pastoral Nymph.*

How gentle was my Damon's air!
Like sunny beams his golden hair;
His voice was like the nightingale's,
More sweet his breath than flow'ry vales.
How hard such beauties to resign!
And yet that cruel task is mine.

AIR.

On ev'ry hill, in ev'ry grove,
Along the margin of each stream.
Dear conscious scenes of formal love,
I mourn, and Damon is my theme.
The hills, the groves, the streams remain,
But Damon there I seek in vain.
From hill, from dale, each charm is fled;
Groves, flocks, and fountains please no more;
Each flow'r in pity droops its head,
All nature does my loss deplore.
All, all reproach the faithless swain,
Yet Damon still I seek in vain.

RECITATIVE.—EUPHROSINE.

Love, the greatest bliss below,
How to taste few women know;
Fewer still the way have hit
How a fickle swain to quit.
Simple nymph, then learn of me
How to treat inconstancy.

AIR.

The wanton god, that pierces hearts,
Dips in gall his pointed darts:
But the nymph disdains to pine,
Who bathes the wound with rosy wine.
Farewell lovers, when they're cloy'd;
If I am scorn'd because enjoy'd,
Sure the squeamish fops are free
To rid me of dull company.

They have charms, whilst mine can please;
I love them much, but more my ease;
Nor jealous fears my love molest,
Nor faithless vows shall break my rest.

Why should they e'er give me pain,
Who to give me joy disdain?
All I ask of mortal man,
Is love to me—whilst he can.

[Exeunt Euphrosyne und Pastoral Nymph.]

Com. Cast thine eyes around, and see

How from every element
Nature's sweets are cull'd from thee,
And her choicest blessings sent.

Hither summer, autumn, spring,
Hither all your tributes bring;
All on bended knee be seen,
Paying homage to your queen!

[The Lady attempts to rise.]

Nay, lady, sit; if I but wave this wand,
Your nerves are all bound up in alabaster,
And you a statue.

Lady. Fool, do not boast;
Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind
With all thy charms, although this corp'ral rind
Thou hast immanacled, while heaven sees good.

Com. Why are you vex'd, lady? why do you frown?
Here dwell no frowns nor anger; from these gates
Sorrow flies far. See, here be all the pleasures
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts:
And first behold this cordial julap here,
That flames and dances in his crystal bounds!

Lady. Know, base deluder, that I will not taste it.
Keep thy detested gifts for such as these.

[Points to his Crew.]

Com. Why should you be so cruel to yourself,
And to those dainty limbs, which nature lent
For gentle usage and soft delicacy;
That have been tir'd all day without repast,

And timely rest have wanted? But, fair virgin,
This will restore all soon.

Lady. 'Twill not, false traitor!
'Twill not restore the truth and honesty
That thou hast banish'd from thy tongue with lies.
Was this the cottage, and the safe abode
Thou told'st me of? Hence with thy brew'd enchant-
ments!

Were it a draught for Juno when she banquets
I would not taste thy treas'nous offer—None,
But such as are good men, can give good things;
And that which is not good is not delicious
To a well-govern'd and wise appetite.
Shall I go on, or have I said enough?

Com. Enough to show
That you are cheated by the lying boasts
Of starving pedants, that affect a fame
From scorning pleasures which they cannot reach.

AIR,—By a Bacchante.

Preach not to me your musty rules,
Ye drones that mould in idle cell!
The heart is wiser than the schools,
The senses always reason well.

If short my span, I less can spare
To pass a single pleasure by;
An hour is long, if lost in care;
They only live who life enjoy.

Com. List, lady; be not coy, and be not cozen'd
With that same vaunted name, virginity.
What need a vermeil tinctur'd lip for that,
Love darting eyes, or tresses like the morn?
There was another meaning in these gifts;
Think what, and be advis'd; you are but young yet;
This will inform you soon. One sip of this
Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight,
Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taste.

Enter the BROTHERS, with their Swords drawn, who wrest the Glass out of COMUS's Hand, and break it against the Ground; he and his Rout are all driven out: after which the SPIRIT enters.

Spi. What, have you let the false enchanter 'scape?
O, ye mistook! you should have snatch'd his wand,
And bound him fast; without his rod revers'd,
We cannot free the lady, that sits here
In stony fetters fix'd, and motionless.
Yet stay, be not disturb'd; now I bethink me,
There is a gentle nymph not far from hence,
Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure,
That sways the Severn stream: she can unlock
The clasp'ing charm, and thaw the numbing spell,
If she be right invok'd in warbled song.
Sabrina, goddess dear!
We implore thy powerful aid
To undo the charmed band
Of true virgin here distress'd,
Through the force and through the will
Of unblest enchanter vile.

SABRINA rises.

RECITATIVE.—SABRINA.

Shepherd, 'tis my office best
To help ensnared chastity;
Brightest lady, look on me!
Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
Drops, that from my fountain pure
I have kept of precious cure;
Thrice upon thy finger's tip,
Thrice upon thy rubied lip;
Next this marble venom'd seat,
Smear'd with gums of glut'nous heat,
I touch with chaste palms, moist and cold:
Now the spell hath lost its hold;
And I must haste, ere morning hour,
To wait in Amphitrite's bower.

*[Sabrina descends, and the Lady rises out of her Seat;
the Brothers embrace her tenderly.]*

E. Bro. Inform us, Thyrsis, if for this thine aid
We aught can pay, that equals thy desert.

Spi. [*Discovering himself*] Pay it to heaven! T
my mansion is.

RECITATIVE.—SPIRIT.

Now my task is smoothly done.
I can fly, or I can run
Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bow'd welkin slow doth bend;
And from thence can soar as soon,
To the corners of the moon.

AIR.

Mortals, that would happy be,
Love virtue—she alone is free;
She can teach you how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime;
Or, if virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.

Enter SPIRITS.

CHORUS.

Taught by virtue, you may climb
Higher than the sphery chime;
Or, if virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her. [*Exeunt*]

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RADCLIFFE COLLEGE

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